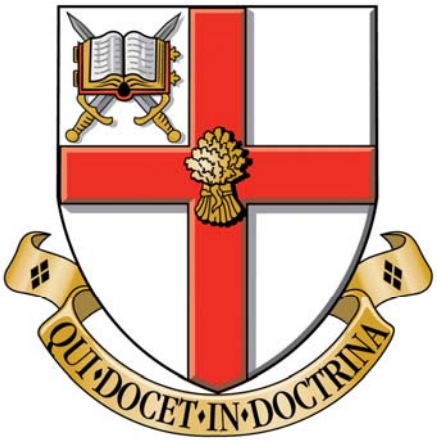

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Author(s): Jennifer Shryane

Title: Evading do-re-mi: Destruction and utopia: A study of Einstürzende Neubauten

Date: 2009

Originally published as: University of Liverpool PhD thesis

Example citation: Shryane, J. (2009). *Evading do-re-mi: Destruction and utopia: A study of Einstürzende Neubauten*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Liverpool, United Kingdom.

Version of item: Submitted version

Available at: http://hdl.handle.net/10034/118073

Evading do-re-mi
Destruction and Utopia

A Study of Einstürzende Neubauten

JENNIFER SHRYANE

PhD Performing Arts
University of Liverpool
2009

Evading do-re-mi

Destruction and Utopia

We hungered for music almost seething beyond control-or even something beyond music, a violent feeling of soaring unstoppably, powered by immense angular machinery across abrupt and torrential seas of pounding blood

(Tony Conrad, *Inside the Dream Syndicate,* 1965,Table of Element, 2000).

London, 04.05 & Grundstück symbol, 11.04
(Photographs taken and overlaid for author by K. Shryane)

A Study of Einstürzende Neubauten

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Liverpool for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy by **Jennifer Shryane,** October, 2009.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research was made possible by the award of a Gladstone Research Fellowship by the University of Chester, for which I am grateful. I would like to express my thanks to my supervisor, Dr. David Pattie, for his creative and constructive criticism, interest and knowledge.

The most useful resource was the interview (live, phone and email): the following people have all generously taken part this way – some of them on many occasions:

Andrea Schmid, Blixa Bargeld, Chris Bohn, Andrew Unruh, Erin Zhu, Alex Hacke, Jochen Arbeit, Rudi Moser, Boris Wilsdorf, Chris Cutler, Maria Zinfert, Gudrun Gut, Ash Wednesday, Klaus Maeck, Jessamy Calkin, Jürgen Teipel, Abby Zane, Phil Minton, Karl J. Palouček, Raquel Lains, Peter Sempel, Elizabeth Cooke, Hartmut Fischer, Mathew Jefferies, Jo Mitchell, Hadewig Kras, Nick Rawling, Hans-Peter Schmid, The Bays, Pedro Figueiredo, Corinne Clark, Ian Williamson, Johannes Beck, Andrew Spencer, Karen Leeder, Mark Chung, Susan Broadhurst, Martyn Bullynck, Robert Lort, Deutsche Rundfunk Archiv, Potsdam and the Bill Violo Studios, Long Beach, in particular, Dianna Santillano.

Einstürzende Neubauten and Andrea Schmid are especially thanked for allowing me ‘in’ so many times and for being so welcoming, interested and open.

Matthew Partridge is Neubauten’s main lyric translator.

Blixa Bargeld is thanked for permission to quote Neubauten’s lyrics.

I hope that this study infects others…

Abstract- EVADING DO-RE-MI

This thesis represents the first comprehensive examination in English of the work of the Berlin-based music collective, Einstürzende Neubauten. It intends to offer evidence that the sonic forays of this group have not only defined a particular cultural moment but have also created new musical possibilities (to appropriate words from Brandon LaBelle). [1] It does this by investigating why the work of these musicians is important within contemporary music, what cultural concerns their music reflects and how the music is created, performed and disseminated. These questions are explored through a range of contexts, including post-war Berlin, Germany's problematic relationship with music, the development of Musique Concrète, Noise/Music and strategies for creative independence. There is a detailed analysis of Neubauten's performance and textual techniques.

This thesis argues that Einstürzende Neubauten are one of the few examples of 'rock-based' artists who have been able to sustain a breadth and depth of work over a number of years while remaining experimental and open to development; that their work offers evidence that they are one of the most complete examples of Artaudian practice in contemporary performance and that their Supporter Initiative (2002-2007) provided a unique working strategy for independence of the consumerist model of music. Finally, it argues that their work helps to present the case for the re-evaulation of European, non-English language contemporary music.

[1] B. LaBelle, *Background Noise,* London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2006, p.224.

Part One – **CONTEXT FOR DESTRUCTION**

> The work of art is a letter addressed, if at all, to strangers, if need be, from other galaxies. Art itself perhaps humanity's last domain, the final autonomy, at its best DISTURBANCE…the ice age of no dialogue between minds, hearts spirits has begun, the only escape route leads into dreams, for some into the cemetery (Heiner Müller, Kleist Prize speech, 1990) [2]

Joseph Beuys*, End of the 20th Century,* 1983-85 (image taken from author's postcard, Tate Modern, London, 2000)

[2] Heiner Müller (1995) *Theatremachine,* (trans./ed.) M.Von Henning, London, Faber and Faber, p.xiv.

Prologue - Löcher and Loss

> It is common to speak of the language of music, but that is neurologically wrong; music doesn't work in the sense of the words that we speak every day or even in the way that the language of painting would work. Music is illogical, and music, in my particular and peculiar view, I would say that music does not exist unless you have a glimpse of utopia; if it doesn't have that it's not music. Music has to at least offer about five degrees of the horizon of utopia…it has to offer the unthinkable, something beyond language. This is what I call music (Bargeld, *The Wire,* October 1996, p.21).[3]

The study argues that since 1980, Einstürzende Neubauten (as a product of the idiosyncratic circumstances of a divided Berlin) have consistently produced a variety of innovative and experimental music. Secondly, it argues that although their methods and philosophies of music-making reflect tumultuous and expanding times in European art, thought and politics, the group's works defy generic and media boundaries. The evidence offered for both these arguments is found in the musicians' unusual application and structure of objet trouvé for instrumentation, the use of their mother tongue and non phonemic vocalisation, the theatrical physicalisation of their performances, the apocalyptic and metaphysical concerns of their texts, their belief in foregrounded process and participatory listening and their efforts to facilitate self-production and maintain autonomy over their work.

[3] B. Bargeld, *beauty and the beholder*, Chris Sharp, in *The Wire,* October, 1996, pp.19-21.

Einstürzende Neubauten (which translates as 'Collapsing Newbuildings') first played at the Moon Club in West Berlin on April 1st 1980.[4] The musicians were Blixa Bargeld, Andrew Unruh, Gudrun Gut and Bette Bartel. The girls left soon after to form Mania D. By 1981/2 the group's members were Blixa Bargeld, N.U.Unruh/Chudy, Alexander Hacke/Borsig, with F.M. Einheit/Mufti and Mark Chung from Abwärts. When the latter two left during 1995/6, Jochen Arbeit and Rudi Moser joined. Boris Wilsdorf (assisted by Marco Paschke) is the group's sound engineer.[5] The name Einstürzende Neubauten (Neubauten/EN) is used to cover any combination of these members (the specific date of the reference will imply membership) and individuals are referred to (when relevant) as above. Their introduction to the Anglo speaking market, via England, was through the intervention of Jim Thirlwell who facilitated their signing to Some Bizarre and Mute in the early eighties.

My subject is a contemporary German group, but I have written in *English* and some of my evidence has been gathered from *unattended* past performances; initially, these details could appear as anomalies and hence, I will deal with these first.[6]

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[4] Gwyn Symonds, in *You can take the fan out of the Academic but should you?* (University of Sidney, 2004 sourced from www.arts.usyd.edu.au/ 6 December 2008) states that as a member of both fan and academic lists online (for her subject) she sees no reason to separate her response as a fan from her response as an academic: 'Finding the words that speak to both groups, passionate and recondite (and which still allow me to get my thesis accepted) now there is the real challenge!' This thesis is not a biography or a fanzine account of the work, although much love is involved; therefore, no chronological 'history' of the group's activities or personal details is included here, other than the time-line in Appendix 1. The approach, which has involved considerable attendance at rehearsals, performances and interviews, has used objective participation.

[5] Australian musician, Ash Wednesday usually accompanies the group for major tours.

[6] There are also areas on which this study frequently touches but which cannot be further explored because of lack of space. Two such areas are: the similar development of contemporary youth music, particularly Noise, in Japan post 1945 and the effect of the tumultuous years of protest and action in the Federal Republic during the sixties and

Neubauten 2007 – Image from author's *Alles Wieder Offen* cover,
with permission to use

The Anomalies

1. Language

> In the dark times, will there also be singing?
>
> Yes, there will also be singing.
>
> About the dark times
>
> (Brecht, *Motto,* 1936-8. 1987, p.320).[7]

It would have been all too easy for me to have used only English translations especially as the group and their 'family' are fluent English speakers but I believe that such an approach would neglect the important contribution which Neubauten have made to the post-1945 rehabilitation of the German

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seventies on its youth culture and, in particular, on the development of an independent German popular music.

[7] Brecht, B. *Poems 1913-1956,* J. Willett, R. Manheim & E. Fried (trans/eds) London, Methuen Publishing Ltd.1987.

language in the Arts in the light of Adorno's statement concerning the impossibility of poetry after Auschwitz. They are one of the few West German music groups (from the 1980s) to consistently perform in, and celebrate, their mother tongue. The national German character and language were so distorted and manipulated by the Third Reich (especially via the radio) that the resulting stereotype of the coldly precise, intimidating and humourless German survives and is still parodied more than 60 years after Hitler's downfall. Hence, the German language (despite being the medium of metaphysics, the Lieder and the work of Goethe, Kleist, Einstein, Marx, Freud, Heine, Brecht and the Manns) has struggled with a Malediction, expressed by Neubauten in *Blume* (1993)[8] as –' my name, should you know it/remains unspeakable/and is spoken-malediction' - a song which Bargeld performs in French, Japanese and English.

Although there has been considerable progress away from the post-war idea of German as a rigid, pedantic, harsh language of hatred, towards a re-appreciation of the German of literature and of the performance arts, the perception of their language and its delivery remains a sensitive issue for some Germans. This was in evidence in BBC Radio 3's *The Struggle for Language* (21 January 2007). The programme described the effects of the Nazi taint as creating a language which was always shouted not spoken, associated with hysteria rather than thought, and with 'words like doses of arsenic.' Post 1945 the language was felt to be so damning that émigrés abroad were ashamed to be heard using it in public. Hence, West Germans

[8] *Tabula Rasa,* Mute Records/Potomak.

soothed themselves with consumerism and Americanism, settling for global English as a suitable alternative, while the East Germans invented a new guilt-free language of the collective. In response to both escape routes, the GDR writer, Heiner Müller, collaborator with, and influence on Neubauten, worked in a language so obscure that it could carry no baggage.[9]

I argue that Blixa Bargeld, as Neubauten's lyrist, has with his Müller-influenced style, helped to re-associate the language with poetry and song through a usage which also bears the influences of Brecht's sharp clarity and concreteness, George Trakl's apocalyptic descriptions and Celan's fractured syntax; he has also focused on the language's inherent theatricality and corporality in delivery. Hence, it is important to emphasize Neubauten's use of German as unusual and political, for in choosing to use German, Neubauten were, and still are (see *Alles Wieder Offen,* 2007- 08) making a statement of identity which keeps them outside the Anglo-American marketplace; this aspect is further explored as a key vocal strategy in Chaper 7.

2. Listening

> Love is man unfinished
>
> (Paul Eluard, translated by Beckett, 2002, p.123)[10]

[9] Müller was not the only post-war German writer to retreat into dense metaphor and absurdity in order to sever his language's association with Nazism; he is cited here because of his close association with Neubauten. Music critic, Chris Bohn has suggested that Bargeld has taken a similar route into complexity to avoid the racism and imperialism of post-1989 West German language (*the primer* in *The Wire,* April, 2000, p.44). Bohn (a.k.a Biba Kopf) has championed the work of Neubauten since the early eighties. He has not only helped to sustain an interest in the group in the UK but has also encouraged their intellectual status through referencing (for example) Benjamin, Cioran, Artaud and Cage in their work. He is frequently cited in this research and has offered much constructive advice and information.

[10] Samuel Beckett, *Poems 1930-1989,* London: Calder Publications Limited, 2002.

‘Survival among the remnants and playing with the pieces’ is a phrase which I have borrowed from Susan Broadhurst (1999, p.24).[11] I have introduced it because it describes both Neubauten’s approach to music and much of my approach to researching this. It is the latter which is focused here as a dichotomy of ‘being there and not being there’*,* a key aspect of researching contemporary performance.[12]

This is a study of a group of working artists which has involved much ‘being there’, watching, listening, talking and sharing. But it is also full of voids, of past ‘not being theres’ (‘experiencing and engaging with desire, desire for that which is already lost’ Blocker 2004, p.xii)[13] through which I rag-picked and played among the remnants and ruins of artifacts (or *texts* to use Barthes’ term).[14] These include memories, photographs, transformed sites, film, video, audio recordings, newsprint and a lost city. Peggy Phelan (1993, p.146) writes in *The Ontology of Performance: representation without reproduction* that:

> Performance’s only life is in the present. Performance cannot be saved, recorded, documented or otherwise participated in the circulation of representations of representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance.

[11] Ms Broadhurst had also borrowed the phrase from Baudrillard (*On the Beach,* 1984) for her critique of liminality in the arts (*Liminal Acts,* London, Cassell, 1999, p. 24.).
[12] This was the central debate of the conference hosted by Queen Mary’s University, London, - *Researching the Contemporary,* 11-12 December 2006*.*
[13] J. Blocker, *What the Body Costs,* London, University of Minnesota, 2004.
[14] This seems appropriate as Barthes’ analysis suggests that viewing ‘*the certain body’* (the text) is as a voyeur – a second degree reader. R. Barthes, *The Pleasures of the Text,* R.Miller (trans),Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1990, pp.16-17.

This dilemma was ever present for me; especially in my use of audio/video archives and personal evidence of performances which I did not attend. The use of these secondary media is necessary because Einstürzende Neubauten's performance style has always been one which focused the presence of the energised and theatrical dancing, screaming body with an awareness of extreme effort, risk and painful celebration. In relying on another's selective lens (or memory), only intermittent second hand evidence can be engaged. Although this second-degree reading [15] has been well supplemented by personal 'being there' observations, interviews and correspondence, there is still the engagement with past bodies and with this comes the problems of subjectivity and misinterpretation - sometimes magnified by language and cultural difference. (This is evidence which Blocker (2004, p.ix) rightly comments, recalls Roland Barthes' description of performance as 'appearance disappearance' for in the end 'the event itself… cannot be found.') However, as a means to bridging this gap I have selected two such 'disappeared' seminal events in Neubauten's development, one based on verbal recall and an audio recording and the other on a reconstruction, and linked these with one at which I was present; these provide a way into the rest of the study.

Firstly, I listen intently to my (vinyl) record version *aufgenommen am 1.6.80, in einer Autobahnbrücke (recorded inside an autobahn bridge,* RuckZuck Records*)* and I try to fill in the gaps, being seduced by what is not present in

[15] See previous footnote.

my recording (the vivid visualizations provided by Unruh)[16] as much as by what is present in the still vibrant sonic experience. Like all of Neubauten's recordings it is very visceral and tactile and yet it is only two months into their existence, June 1980. The circumstances of the recording are as follows; Bargeld, intent on playing his own environment, recalled from his youth, a steel cavity under an autobahn flyover in Friednau-Schöneberg in which he used to play with Andrew Unruh. The project was to create sounds from the steel walls of the enclosed space along with a guitar, some metal percussion and a few bits of battery-powered equipment which they could squeeze into the 1.5 metres high, 5 metres wide and 50 metres long cavity. Pocket torches were used for illumination, a Telefunken Bajazzo transistor radio as an amplifier, candles were used to indicate oxygen levels and a cassette recorder captured the moment.

When I listen, I can only glimpse momentary flashes of this but what I hear, in about 40 minutes, is one of the most unusual recordings I own, a recording of radical experimentation, both instrumentally and vocally. Everything sounds strangely muted, hollow and unreal; there is the echoing, vibrating metal drumming of the interior walls, the higher persistent metallic chiming, the low rumbles of the passing traffic bleeding in: a sawing, gnawing noise which hurts, a guitar which drones and cries on its battery power, and toward the end, as the final noise of closure, a slamming, as if from huge metal doors. A solitary clap follows which provides a touch of destructive, anarchic humour

[16] Interview with author 14 February 2007.During this Unruh has confirmed that the site still exists, although it is now inaccessible because of the altered road layout.

(as invoked by Artaud, 1970, p.31).[17] This lonely clap marks what is missing, for Unruh has explained that he and Bargeld were totally alone from midnight to 6am working on the cassette recording (interview with author 14 February 2007). Then, of course, amidst this orchestra of noise, there is Bargeld's voice. It seems at a distance, isolated and in pain; in one short piece of film I have seen of a reconstruction in April 1981, Bargeld is bent double in the small space as he performs. The voice ranges from the intoning of different vowel sounds through varied pitches and tempos - elongated yells, rasping screams, drones of non-phonemic sounds and at one point, in Dadaist fashion, the German alphabet which is shouted amidst sharp yelps. It offers no logos apart from the alphabet snatches for it is heavy with another language - the ur-language for which Artaud strove. In fact, its only true likeness is Artaud's *Cry from the Stairwell (*1947) which has a similar sense of corporeal language or 'spatial poetry' in an equally submerged, isolated, hollow space.[18]

A creative throughline can be traced from the autobahn's hidden architecture to the cavernous hole of the rejected Palast der Republik (at which I was present) for a group of musicians intent on exploring questions concerning the nature and function of music and its relationship to site. It passes through the infamous *Concerto for Voice and Machinery* (Institute of Contemporary Art – ICA- London, 1984). This lost performance has been made tangible for me by my attendance at the rehearsals and the performance of Jo Mitchell's

[17] A. Artaud, (1970, *The Theatre and its Double,* (trans.) V.Corti, London, Calder & Boyars Ltd.
[18] This is *spatial poetry* as described by Artaud in *Oriental and Western Theatre (*Corti, 1970, pp. 50-54).

reconstruction of the original event at the ICA on 19-20 February 2007. The original 20 minute gig on 3 January 1984 by members of Neubauten with Frank Tovey, Genesis P-Orridge and Gila has achieved such notoriety and mythological status that it is now impossible to analyse meaningfully.[19] The reconstruction (plus evidence gathered during the rehearsals from bootlegs, photographs and recalled experiences) gave me provocative and fleeting glimpses of this most Artaudian of performances. There was the raw, petrol-filled noise of the erotic earth pounder, the squealing drills on metal as sparks showered the onlookers, the cement-mixer churning glass and bricks, the chain-saw's bursts of frenetic activity, the Dadaist yells and screams of the actors representing Gila and Tovey and eventually, Bargeld with his all-encompassing rendering of *Sehnsucht*. Jo Mitchell's committed performers[20] grasped the vanished power of the original event in the manner of Roland Barthes' description of past performances as a glimpse of tantalising flesh where the garment gapes: 'it is this flash itself which seduces, or rather: the staging of an appearance-as-disappearance' (Blocker, 2004, p.xi).

Mitchell's re-construction which strove (Phelan, 1993, p.152)[21] 'to learn the value of what is lost to learn not the value of meaning but the value of what cannot be reproduced or seen (again)' was as underpinned by *der Fehler* ['mistake'] as was the original event. During the reconstructed performance,

[19] It was commissioned by Michael Morris, the site programmer for ICA (as part of the Big Brother Rock Week) with Mark Chung and F M Einheit who composed a concerto parody in three movements with heavy industrial machinery and non-linguistic vocals. The event, which was not a Neubauten gig, is so well documented that there is little need to retell it here; fear of damage being inflicted on the stage and auditorium, perhaps by over-stimulated spectators (and the rumoured possible disclosure of the subterreanean passageways linking Whitehall and Buckingham Palace under the venue) drove ICA to close the event and demand damages from Stevo, the musicians' Some Bizarre manager.
[20] There is a cast list in the Appendices.
[21] P.Phelan, *Unmarked,* London, Routledge,1993.

the chain saw 'fucked up' in true Cageian style (despite intensive rehearsal checks). But the performer found other ways to dismantle the piano (the only traditional instrument on stage) and hence, made use of the error to counteract any predictable *Gleich* ['the same'].[22]

Unlike the 1984 audience, those present in 2007 did not refuse to leave the space when ICA re-enacted the closure of the performance, nor did they become destructive; instead there was a respectful, informed attention given to this 'artwork'. However, it was possible to grasp the disappeared transgressive nature of the original work and its power to disturb and alarm even the liberal ICA. The reconstruction, in other words, could still evoke the utopian dream that music might make a difference - could 'offer the unthinkable' - as Bargeld states in the quotation used to open this introduction.[23] These beliefs were expressed by several of Jo Mitchell's actors and guided their commitment to the project. On the other hand, one witness of the original, the music critic, Chris Bohn stated in the Talkback session, (ICA, 16 March 2007) that the 1984 twenty minute set was a non-event musically, made into an event through media coverage; so perhaps I *was* at a performance on 20 February 2007 and not a reconstruction.

[22] *Gleich* is introduced here with *Der Fehler* as both are key words for Neubauten (see *Die genaue Zeit*, *1983*, Chapter 7:1 *Grain* and *Bildbeschreibung,* Chapter 9:2 *Müllerarbeit*). as well as being important concepts for Heiner Müller. The reference to Cage concerns his belief that a performer must learn to surrender control to non-musical objects.

[23] Another 'disappeared gig' has been reconstructed. This occurred on 21 December 1989 (*Elektro-Kohle, Wilhelm-Piek- Saal*) and was Neubauten's first East Berlin performance as the Wall crumbled. The original recording includes Müller's opening address. At the time of writing there is an Internet appeal from German film maker, Uli M Schueppel, for witnesses of this concert to help in a film recreation. See the postscript regarding film's release, June 2009.

Jo Mitchell's reconstruction of ICA concerto, 2007, with actor of Einheit about to destroy the piano (Photograph taken by author, 02.07)

The gig at which I was present was the supporters' *Grundstück* concert (4 November 2004) at the condemned East German Palast der Republik in Berlin. If the first example given metaphorically deconstructed the autobahn, an icon of Western Capitalism (albeit borrowed from Hitler) and the second literally hacked at the all too compliant liberal arts establishment, this last took on a controversial structure, which was iconic for the losers, but condemned to *Rückbau* ['unbuilding'- 'removal'] by the winners in their rewriting of history. This time, the site was not attacked but gently tapped, stroked, coaxed and amplified; it was softened with light and filled with a 100 voices in a melancholic yearning for a social utopia. The building's rusty intestines took on a new beauty which somehow captured the long-claimed positiveness of Neubauten's joyful destructiveness. But, most importantly, the event was conceived and performed totally independently of the music industry in a shared circular space, by the group and their extended family of colleagues, friends and world-wide supporters. With the attendees' direct contributions - voices, drumming and organisational help - it became a worthy example of

Sellars' advocacy of music as social inclusion.[24] Here too, the audience refused to leave (as ICA's 1984 spectators had done) but instead of putting their energies into dismantling the site, they continued to play on Unruh's drum tables with a physical commitment and dedication worthy of Neubauten's own ethos. And with such a 'being there' in mind, the study begins…

Grundstück rehearsal (Photograph taken by author, 11.04)

I start by constructing, in Chapter 1, the framework of *die Destruktion* (relevant for many of those Germans artists and performers born after 1945- *die Nachgeborenen*) [25] which informs the work and ideas of 'Collapsing Newbuildings'. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 provide the historical and cultural background for this. These four chapters comprise Part One. Part Two considers how the practice of Neubauten (their performative strategies)

[24] This refers to Peter Sellars' impassioned speech to the American Symphony Orchestra League in Los Angeles, January 2007, in which he stated that worthy music helps to stop people committing suicide and creates a shared space, what he terms as 'inclusion.' Similar sentiments were expressed by Alexander Hacke as his driving force for being a musician (interview with author 14 February 2007: see Chapter 10).

[25] *Nachgeborenen* is taken from Brecht's poem 'To those born later', 1936/8 and is frequently applied in this thesis to signify artists born after 1945. Brecht, *Bad Time for Poetry,* J.Willett (ed) London, Methuen, 1995, p.136.

engaged with this destruction and Part Three analyses their attempts at reconstruction –of their preferred utopian social structure.

Chapter One: **ARCHITECTURE and Apocalypse, ANGELS and ruins, UTOPIA and music**

Images of Berlin, photographs taken and overlaid by K Shryane for author, 04.06.

Bis zum Kollaps ist nicht viel Zeit…drei Jahre noch**…**

['Not much time until the collapse...only three years'*…*] (*Kollaps*,1981). [26]

Our collapse is imminent but not inevitable,

We begin to live authentically only where philosophy ends, at its wreck, when we have understood its terrible nullity, when we have understood that it was futile to resort to it, that it is no help

(E.M.Cioran, 1949: 1975, p. 48).[27]

[26] *Kollaps,* ZickZack, 1981.
[27] E.M. Cioran, *The History of Decay,* 1949*,* (trans.) Howard R. New York: Arcade Pub.1975.

Introduction

My aim in this opening chapter is to identify, within the context of West Germany's post-war cultural recasting, three artistic concerns found in Neubauten's philosophy and practice as *Nachgeborenen* musicians. These three concerns, which are closely linked, are the apocalypse and collapsing architecture, the relation of art to memory and history, and the striving for utopia through social (and personal) artistic pursuits.

I begin by examining the musicians' chosen name and its different readings. These readings variously imply the implosion of architectures which, in Neubauten's initial context, were the *Wirtshaftswunder* ['economic miracle'] and the *Schlager* music associated with it.[28] This approach makes use of Georges Bataille's concept of architecture as power and, via the leitmotif of the apocalypse, connects with metaphors of disease and decay in the writings of Antonin Artaud and E.M.Cioran. In the second section art which relates to memory, mourning and guilt inherent in Germany's recent history is considered through ideas selected from the work of Walter Benjamin, Heiner Müller, Anselm Kiefer, two Prenzlauer Berg poets and some redemptive aspects of German New-Wave cinema. I have chosen to focus this second section on the iconic image of the angel of history prevalent in much of this

[28] Chris Bohn has described West Germany's post-war force-fed economical revival, the *Wirtshaftswunder*, as '*a* displacement activity for the work of mourning necessary to restoring the psychic health of the nation' (*epiphanies*, *The Wire,* January 1999, p.82). He regards Neubauten's music as a reaction against this and part of the pusuit of a new German-European identity sought through diverse means including music, the New-Wave cinema and the direct action of 'protest' groups from the Student Movement/Extra- Parliamentary Opposition (APO) to Baader-Meinhof. The *Schlager* was a hit song originally from the operettas and light entertainment of the 19th century which came to signify the post war conservative values of the 'economic miracle' and the erasure of any nasty past.

work. The final part examines the yearning for a socially inclusive utopia through the experience of art which can result from some form of self-healing; this reflects the beliefs of Ernst Bloch, Joseph Beuys and John Cage.

1: Architekur ist/und Geiselnahme

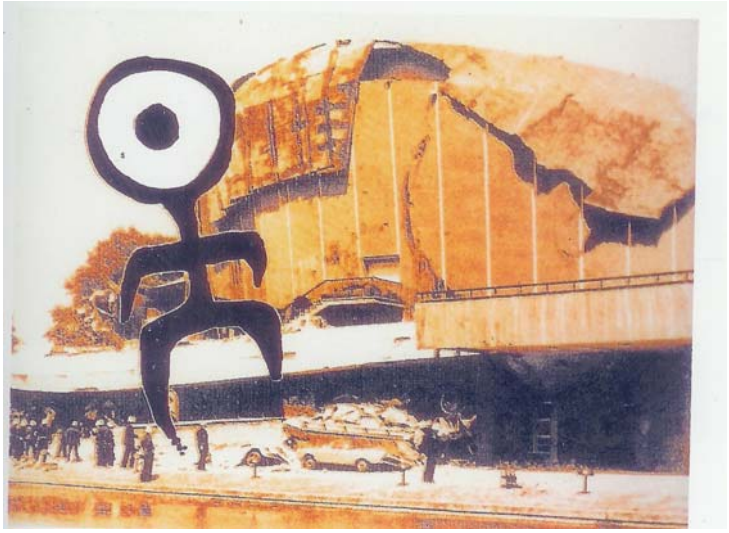
['architecture is/and hostage-taking'](Neubauten) [29]

> The uprightness of the work, to be more precise is the reign of literality over breath
>
> (Derrida, *La Parole Soufflée,* 1978, p.184).[30]

The disposition for musicians and critics to discuss music through architectural discourse and for musicians to have had an architectural training (e.g. Iannis Xenakis and Janek Schaeffer) implies a certain positive complexity to the work. However, the use of the architectural motif by Einstürzende Neubauten has a particular resonance for a specific time and space in Germany's recent past and in the peculiar circumstances of divided Berlin; hence, it suggests a more subversive approach. This resonance is most vividly present in their name ['Collapsing Newbuildings'] and in their persistent employment of the term *Architektur* as a metaphor and a descriptor. The significance of the name Einstürzende Neubauten as Collapsing (adjectival) Newbuildings is often simply linked to a much-cited but coincidental episode shortly after their first public performance on 1 April 1980. This was the collapse, on 21 May 1980, of the 'butterfly wing' roof of the *Kongresshalle*, an American financed and designed showcase structure intended as a symbol of Western liberty in West Berlin's Tiergarten. Although

[29] Album title, SO36. 27.11.82.
[30] J.Derrida, *Writing and Difference,* (trans.) A. Bass, London, Routledge, Kegan Paul Ltd.1978.

this new building's collapse was a useful publicity coup, the group's name, in the context of Berlin's ever-changing architecture, resonates far beyond this, even up to the present policy of so-called Critical Reconstruction which is still taking place in the city two decades after the *Wende*.[31]



The collapse of the Kongresshalle's upper structure with superimposed Neubauten logo, 1980 (image taken, with permission, from author's copy of *Kalte Sterne,* 2004)

Neubauten's name took on this added layer of significance (see Hubertus Siegert's documentary, *Berlin Babylon,* 2000)[32] as reunited Berlin became a building site again. The reconstruction process earned the witty name *Architainment;* this described the manner in which every stage of construction and deconstruction was made accessible to the public with information displayed and broadcast, both about technical achievements and philosophical intent (Zitzlsperger in Taberner & Finlay, 2002, p.45).[33] These architectural obsessions and sensitivities are perhaps best symbolised by the

[31] The Germans' name for the Peaceful Revolution 1989-1990; it means *turn/change*. It can also be applied to the sudden necessity for the East Germans to look in a different direction.
[32] Einstürzende Neubauten, *Berlin Babylon,* (dir.) Siegert, Berlin, H. S.U.M.O Production DVD. 2000.
[33] Ulrike Zitzlsperger *Filling the Blanks: Berlin as a Public Showcase* in *Recasting German Identity,* S.Taberner & F. Finlay (eds) New York, Camden House, 2000, pp.37-50.

InfoBox (a giant red viewing platform featured in Neubauten's *Die Befindlichkeit des Landes*) which was erected in Leipziger Platz from 1995 to 2000; it provided detailed explanations for both citizen and visitor about the corporate make-over of one of Europe's most famous public places. Before reunification, another viewing platform nearby offered the sight of no-man's land and a glimpse across the Wall into the 'Other' landscape of the East.

Potsdamer Platz, 1930 (Echte Photographie, postcard from author's private collection)

The Info-box, Potsdamer Platz (www.galinsky.com/buildings/infobox/index)

Potsdamer Platz in 2006 (Photograph taken by author, 10.06)

During the spring and summer of 2006 a similar viewing platform surrounded by long lines of explanatory billboards, protestations and disclaimers decked the former 'Red Square' of the GDR to explain the demise of the Palast der Republik (the site of Neubauten's 2004 *Grundstück* work). Here the billboards protested, in an Orwellian manner, that this particularly sensitive and controversial decision was not a destructive act but a '*Rückbau*' by *Demokratische Entscheidung.*

Billboarding outside the Palast der Republik (Photograph taken by author, 04.06)

Thus while post-1945 and post-1989 literature, art, film and music struggled with or side-stepped Germany's wounds and ghosts, architecture (as *Architainment*) became an exorcising spectacle open to all and the building sites were the showcases for this new transparency. This is famously represented in a piece of frequently cited architecture - Sir Norman Foster's elliptical, transparent dome which crowns the Reichstag. Its spiral walkway is intended to allow the well-searched general public to look down on their busy politicians at work.

The more literal aspect of the group's name also requires an explanation. Bargeld's response (in the early eighties) to an American interviewer's query about the meaning of the group's name was that all the buildings in West Berlin were 'Neubauten' (*Liebeslieder,* (dir.) K. Maeck & J. Schenkel, Studio K7, VHS, 1993). This was not only due to war damage but because in the Allies' carve-up of Berlin, the East acquired Mitte, the city centre and most of the cultural, educational and historical sites, which the Western occupiers, after the more permanent division of the city, had to hastily replicate in their sector as part of the cultural Cold War.

There is also a more overtly political, grassroots reading of the group's name. After the erection of the Wall in 1961, Kreuzberg (in the American zone), which was in close proximity to the barrier, was abandoned by businesses and the middle classes. These neglected buildings, along with uncleared bomb-damaged structures, became squats for the growing alternative scene. The nineteen seventies and eighties saw several confrontations between the

police acting for the property developers who wished to erect new and more expensive buildings, and the *Haus-Besetzters* ['squatters']. Neubauten members and associates were part of this squatters' community. Hence, Bataille's concept of anti-architecture and his declaration that the taking of the Bastille was a strike against the power house structures of the mighty and their ruling systems (Hollier, 1989, p.x)[34] relates directly to the occupation of the old properties by, and the street action of, these protesters.[35]

If Bataille's critique of architecture (as the work of the victor and the oppressor) is placed together with Julia Kristeva's analysis of the parental masculine and its semiotics and logos (Hill, 1989, p.149)[36] then any attack on architecture is an attack on those complicit with authoritarian hierarchies and serves the cause of the *informe* or *abject* (to use Bataille and Kristeva's respective terminology).[37] Within the context of Einstürzende Neubauten's work, this attack initially took the form of noise-music (with its interference, freeform and painful listening) and disease –'*Ich stehe auf Krankheit'* [I stand

[34] D. Hollier, *Against Architecture: the Writings of Georges Bataille,* (trans.) B.Wing, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1989.
[35] Bataille's comment seems somewhat ironic now that the Bastille is the home of the elitist of musical performance, the opera. However, the designers have made full use of this irony with their incorporation of a reoccurring prison bar motif in the reconstruction.
[36] Leslie Hill 'Kristeva's theorizing the avant-garde?' in *Abjection, Melancholy and Love, the work of Julia Kristeva*, (eds) J.Fletcher & A. Benjamin, Warwick, Warwick Studies, 1989, pp.137-56.
[37] L'Informe it is not simply the opposite to form for it is outside any binary construct; it is to be formless and hence, troublesome – it does not fit in so it negates meaning and threatens hierarchy – like noise/music. The Abject, in this context, is the state between subject and object associated with marginalised groups and states involving blood, corpse, semen, faeces etc. Abject Art as an activity working in such matter can be found in Dadaism, Artaudian theatre, Viennese Aktionism and latterly, for example, in the work of Genesis P.Orridge, Franko B, Kira O'Reilly and the Chapman Brothers. Both terms can be applied to Neubauten's early work which defied the popular song format with layers of 'freeform' noise. Bohn prefers to engage with Kristeva's Abjection in discussing the work of Neubauten (and that of Throbbing Gristle, Swans, Coil, Cabaret Voltaire, Foetus, Lydia Lunch and Test Department). His imagery describes a 'going-down' and 'holeness'. He cites Neubauten's music as 'the most perfection expression of the Abject's imagination' ('Bacillus Culture' in C. Neal, *Tape Delay,* Middlesex, SAF Publishing Ltd.1992, p.12).

by sickness'] *Steh auf Berlin,* 1981 - particularly in the sense of the contamination of Artaud's Plague: '*Ich steck dich an'* ['I infect/inflame you'] *Vanadium-I-Ching,* 1983*).* These two aspects are initially discussed here and further developed in Chapters 5 and 6.

The (re)construction of newbuildings and the image of *Deutschland als Baustelle* ['always a building site'] had begun to dominate political agendas on both sides of the Wall from the 1960s as part of the cultural Cold War. For the East these building projects were symbols of the promised Socialist utopia with the intended construction of *volkspalasts* (that previously had been the reserves of the rich and powerful) for the people to live, work and play in. For the West they indicated the supremacy of capitalism and commerce as the new architecture became synonymous with the *Wirtshaftswunder,* business, property ownership and the Adenauer government's petit-bourgeois values.

In retaliation to this rampant consumerism and fuelled with an abhorrence of their parents' silence over the past, anger over re-armament (*ohne mich)* and with their government's conservative, pro-American policies, the students (bonded by birth around *Stunde Null*) took to the streets and to the hostage-taking of their universities. These activities were an essential part of the APO (*Ausserparamentarische Opposition)* between1965-69.[38] Although this

[38] The APO/Students' Movement (which grew out the Easter Marches from 1960 onwards against nuclear missile bases) saw itself as the only opposition to the Grand Coalition of Christian Democrats and Social Democrats. The protesters wanted constitutional freedoms – of opinion, speech and assembly (the press was dominated by the Springer Empire which vitriolically persecuted the protesters) and the reform of the authoritarian, and still not denazified, university system. Other concerns were the Third World, Vietnam, US military bases on German soil and the number of former Nazis in high office in government and business.

activism, which was predominantly peaceful, did achieve social, sexual and educative changes in West Germany and some sensitisation toward the Nazi past, it failed to prevent the passing of the *Notstandgesetze* (1968) which gave the authorities draconian rights to restrict movement, to access telephone and mail communications, to use surveillance photography, informants and provocateurs in order to stem resistance.[39] By 1969 the resistance had disintegrated; those more radical students, frustrated at the failure to achieve regime change, formed the Baader-Meinhof complex (RAF- *Rote Armee Fraktion)* and pursued direct action with the bombing of buildings (in particular, banks) and kidnappings and assassinations of the owner-occupiers (especially if former Nazis) 'to tease out what they perceived to be the latent fascism of late 60s Germany' (Bohn, *The Wire,* January 1999, p.82).[40] By 1972 the founder members were in prison; those 68ers (the *Sympathisantenszene* of the 1970s) who shared tacit sympathies for some of the politics of the RAF and grave concerns that the coercive response from the government would cross the democratic boundaries into fascism, had not supported the violent resistance. Thus, Karen Henshaw (Michigan State University Conference- *Revisiting Deutscher Herbst,* January 2007*)*[41] argues,

[39] For some this was reminiscent of Hitler's Enabling Act, 1933.

[40]*)* Baader-Meinhof have retained a fascination on mythological terms spawning debates, forums, films, songs, literature, photography and art; ICA organised a cinema retrospective (called *Baader's Angels)* in December 2007; Manchester Cornerhouse did likewise in November 2008 with the release of Uli Edel's *Der Baader Meinhof Komplex*. Unruh confirmed that in the 1970s, these activists were heroes for many young people; the original (student) anger of the *Rote Armee Fraktion* initially won a lot of sympathy amongst artists, intellectuals and left wingers-'*one in four Germans confessed that they would give shelter to a hunted RAF member'* (Edel's *Baader Meinhof Komplex*, 2008). However, Unruh disowns this view now believing that their actions were more self-motivated than socialistic or anti-Vietnam (interview with author 21 December 2007). Although 1977 is pinpointed here third/fourth generation RAF action continued into the early nineties with the assassination of Detler Karsten Rohwedder, the president of Treuhandanstalt.

[41] Email correspondence from Dr. Matthew Jefferies, German Department, Manchester University on Michigan State University conference – *Revisiting Deutscher Herbst,* K.M. Hanshaw, T. Rippey & J.Sherber, December 2007.

the FRG proved itself as neither Third Reich-fascist nor Weimar- weak and, after the 'German Autumn' of 1977, (the controversial deaths of the key original RAF leaders in Stammheim prison) was able to integrate the large disaffected youth population who had been a source of instability and ongoing civil strife.

I have digressed from my main discussion to give attention to these events in order to put into context the post-1977 punk, *Neue Deutsche Welle* and *Geniale Dilletanten* youth's alternative anti-capitalist, disruptive behaviour through their noise-music, clothes, art, film and local, self-supporting social networks. The preceding period of political unrest (described above) provided the stimulus and means for the development of an independent German rock music; it began with the folk and protest singers and was honed by the desire of the *Nachgeborenen* for their own German identity and to shake off the implanted American head (as expressed by Ralf Hütter of Kraftwerk, 1975).[42] I will develop these issues in the following chapter in order to explain Einstürzenden Neubauten's immediate musical context.

Such a lengthy diversion also serves the cause of Neubauten's architectural leitmotif, for the group adapted the desired destruction/explosions of their older politicised contemporaries into the image of guerrilla music aimed at *imploding* the imported cultural artistic structures dominated by America. Chris Bohn describes Neubauten's destructive resistance thus:

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[42] Kraftwerk/Hütter interview, www.themilkfactory.co.uk/features/kraftwerk.htm accessed 07.09.06.

> The Ruinen culture of late 20th century Germany is particularly strongly felt in (Neubauten's) early releases. Like blinded Samsons raging against the shackles chaining them to the pillars of a society dishonest about itself and prepared to stifle all expression rather than risk outside censure. They would bring it to collapse on top of themselves (Maeck, 1996, p.118).

Woodcut by Hans Grein (16thC) *Samson destroying the temple*. Image from author's copy of *Haus der Lüge,* 1989, with permission.

Example of Gordon Matta-Clarke's anarchitecture-*Splitting,* 1974 (Attlee, Tate, 2007, p.2)

The urban-guerrilla warfare suggested by Bohn's imagery is aptly captured by a photograph originally depicted on the back cover of Neubauten's first album, *Kollaps* (ZickZack, 1981). Here a black-clad Bargeld, flanked on either side by Einheit and Unruh (resembling a group of guerrilla street fighters) stand to attention between the Nazi-associated symbols of the Olympic Stadium towers with their objet trouvé instruments ritualistically laid out like captured weaponry, ready to assault their listeners' ears and the Federal Republic's musical/architectural structures.[43]

[43] Hamburg punk writer/producer, and Neubauten associate, Klaus Maeck attempted similar guerrilla cultural media work. His sound and film activities (influenced by William Burrough's cut ups) worked as 'terrorist tapes' intended to disrupt the channels of power, formulaic

Photograph reproduced from author's album cover *Kollaps,* 1981, with permission to use, (original by Gruchot)

As the *Kollaps* photograph demonstrates, for Neubauten the preferred mode of attack on the power structures was through music with its extension into noise and painful listening and (as previously stated) its related lifestyle of decay and disease. [44] Hence, their early work could be called music-informe; it sought to disrupt musical form by sinking and inverting boundaries; it ignored all structures of verse and chorus, and instrumentation as frame, interlude or backing. Gordon Matta-Clark's *anarchitectural* projects (see photograph 11) offer an interesting variation on this – and the word. [45] These installation works, cut into found abandoned buildings, dissolved the differentiation between the vertical and the horizontal and disrupted the visual

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entertainment and Musak's anaesthetising public address systems. This is the subject of Maeck's film, *Decoder*, made with some of Neubauten and Burroughs in Berlin in 1983. Maeck also wrote *Hör mit Schmerzen* (Berlin, Die Gestalten Verlag, 1996) which is referenced many times in this study.

[44] This is reflected in Susan Sontag's description of Artaud's planned theatre as 'a commando action against established culture, an assault on the bourgeois public' (Sontag (ed.) *Antonin Artaud- Selected Writings,* Berkeley, University of California Press, 1988, p.xxxviii).

[45] The word 'anarchitecture' is taken from the collaborative exhibition which involved Matta-Clark in New York, 1974; for further information see J. Attlee, *Toward Anarchitecture: Gordon Matta-Clark and Le Corbusier*www.tate.org.uk/research/tateresearch/tatepapers/07spring 2007, accessed 04.02.08.

form and the skyline of the building. Despite the above appropriation of 'informe' to describe Neubauten's early guerrilla sound, Bataille's original use implied a lack of interest in any lifting up to new artistic form. Rather it suggested the opposite, a reverse sublime or advocation of a mess for the viewer to experience *per se.*[46] Neubauten's early use of Dada-Punk trash appropriation principles of industrial noise and pre-linguistic utterance aimed to infect, inflame and transform the recipient and the artform and hence, are better expressed through Artaud's giving himself up to 'feverish dreams […] in order to deduce new laws' (Corti, 1999, p.67).[47]

However, decay and disease were central to the musicians' early conceptual framework especially through the writings of the Romanian philosopher E.M.Cioran (1911-95) as well as those of Artaud. It was this aspect of Neubauten which Chris Bohn explained that his colleagues and family, in the early 1980s, found the most incomprehensible regarding his critical acclaim of the group as it is such an alien one for most Westerners programmed to pursue health and newness.[48] References to disease and decay are to be found in many of Neubauten's works, for example, *Vanadium-I-ching* 1983, *Seele brennt, Yü-Gung, Z.N.S.* 1985, *Zerstörte Zelle 1987 and 12305te Nacht*

[46] This is Victor Grauer's (*Other Voices*, 2.2.03.02) argument concerning the artists used by Rosalind Krauss and Yves-Alain Bois in their curatorship of *Formless: A User's Guide* at the Pompidou Centre, 1996 (2000). Grauer, V.2002. *Other Voices, Formless: A User's Guide,* www.othervoices.org accessed 14. 09.06.

[47] This is suggested in the Krauss and Bois (Pompidou 1996/2000 as above) discussion of Bataille's Entropy. They link this to his fascination with rot, waste and decomposition, whereas Neubauten's subversion (of architecture/music/body through purposeful neglect, decay and disease) always included the investigation and extension of their art and was not aimed at audience therapy.

[48] 'The enduring interest in the group derives from being excited by something that on initial exposure was atonal, asocial, primitive and back in 1982, with all EN/Blixa's talk of disease and decline, perceived by family, friends and some of my colleagues at NME as abhorrent' (Bohn, email communication with author 2 March 2006).

1993, (this is further explored in Chapter 5). As with noise-music and the use of debris, the concept of disease was a deliberate negation of the *Wirtshaftswunder*, of pleasant somnambulistic music and of the stereotypical upright, healthy figure of the German character (an image manipulated and distorted by the Third Reich).[49] It also formed part of their rejection of another *Nachgeborenen* musical response to dealing with memory, responsibility and future frailties – the foregrounding of post-human, errorless, erasing space/machine-music.[50]

It is useful at this point to return to the word *Architektur* (which, as previously stated, consistently appears in Neubauten's work) and to itemise its various interpretations within this context. First, there is its political representation as the upright power and culture of the victors post 1945, which provoked in some, the desire for apocalyptic collapse; secondly, its romantic representation (Unruh's description) as the gaps and holes of Punk Art and the squatter spaces of war-ruined Kreuzberg/West Berlin;[51] then, socially to represent the network of Neubauten's extended family and supporters.[52] Furthermore Neubauten have consistently played with the word *Architektur* in the titles of their works: the first *Musterhaus* album is called *Anarchitektur*

[49] It was also, for groups like Throbbing Gristle, about out-abjecting the ultimate abjection of Auschwitz- e.g. their Death Factory logo.
[50] Neubauten also use the concept of disease as a metaphor for infecting other artists with the desire to pursue independence from the music industry. Such sentiments are expressed in David Keenan's *Annihilating Angels* in *The Wire*, February 2004, p.38-45 and in Erin Zhu's ongoing *OpenNote* work. Zhu was the creator of Neubauten's Supporter Initiative (see Chapter 10).
[51] 'Berlin possessed a certain amount of romanticism. When trees grow up through houses as they slowly decay, it looks rather interesting; you don't find corners like that in Berlin anymore' (Unruh in M.Dax *No Beauty without Danger,* Bremen: Druckhaus Humburg 2005, p.17).
[52] Zhu described this as a '*Social Sculpture'* (interview with author 12 October 2006). It is also captured in the revised logo; the Supporter image is fixed in time and space, connected and earthed with life-lines whereas the former appeared disembowelled, unwired, deterritorised, and dancing.

(March 2005), perhaps in deference to the work of Gordon Matta-Clark. The three compilation albums are entitled *Strategien gegen Architekturen*,[53] and, most significant of all, is the phrase, *Architektur ist Geiselnahme* - the title given to a work which has been constantly revisited. This is a provocative and contradictory statement which places the power symbol with the attack and suggests Bataille's argument that architecture enslaves the minds and hearts of the subjugated peoples.[54]

Architecture as metaphor can be most clearly found in the group's philosophy of collapsing closed thought and formulaic musical and studio structures by inserting *der Fehler* as noise/interference and space as silence, into their music. Architecture as performance is indicated in their use of unusual sites with assembled instruments from found objects collapsed from their usual modes of utility. Finally, Architecture as artistic material occurs both in Neubauten's sonic landscapes and labyrinths as well as in the lyrics themselves, which often employ images of the cosmos, buildings, walls, governmental and the bodily structures (e.g. *Haus der Lüge* 1989, *Sie* 1993) and are written as a building block typography on the page (e.g. *Halber Mensch* 1985*, Ich bin's* 1987*)*. Hence, references to architectural structure – fixed and functioning - with its opposites of ruins, decay, impermanence and error occur throughout this study.

[53] At the time of writing a fourth is awaiting release by EMI/Mute.

[54] It is worth balancing this with Brecht's sober reminder in *Der Kaukasische Kreidekreis* that when the houses of the great collapse, many little people are slain.

2: Engel der Vernichtung [exterminating angel] [55]

Jeder Engel ist schrecklich [every angel is terrible] (Rilke, 1923)

a. *Ich raüme auf...*
[I'm clearing up...](*Grundstück, Perpetuum Mobile,* 2004)

Central to the concept of destruction and ruins and providing a link to an exploration of art as memory are the writings of Walter Benjamin (1892–1940) who is the much-cited iconic mentor of Einstürzende Neubauten.[56] I have selected from Benjamin's wide-ranging oeuvre three key figures, two of which need some initial introduction here - the Destructive Character and the Angel of History – while the third, the Rag-Picker, is introduced in Chapter Four.

Unlike the abject or informe, Benjamin offered Neubauten more than wanton destruction for its own sake (which he believed merely mirrored production for its own sake) and more than wounds or disease. His ideal *mensch* ['mankind'] was one who could take on the coming ice-age (two years before Hitler's rise); s/he must be cheerful in the knowledge that everything deserved to perish.[57] This Destructive Character (1931) was not intended as a contrasting image to Apollonian beauty yet neither was it Dionysian, a Romantic nihilist, nor even a liberal humanist. (Benjamin thought these were no match for what he viewed as the demonic perversion wrought by the *übermensch*.) Only a new

[55] The extensive *The Wire* article (David Keenan) on Neubauten, February 2004, pp.38-45 entitled the musicians as *Annihilating Angels;* 'exterminating angels' is the title of a *Zeichnungen des Patienten O.T.*song (1983).
[56] This is a connection which Bargeld frequently acknowledges by commenting that Benjamin has always been a friend to the band.
[57] The German word *mensch* is deliberately used here to make a link with Brecht and Benjamin's shared belief in the need for a new *unmensch* with resilience and cunning more than heroism so that, as Brecht wrote 'the hard thing gives way' (W. Benjamin, *Understanding Brecht,* (trans.) A. Bostock, 1983, London, Verso. 1983, p.71

unmensch could be equal to the situation - an *unmensch* whose 'task it was to bring on the dawning of a new humankind that would prove itself by destruction,' (Hanssen, 2000, p.123)[58] and was willing to create a tabula rasa for a new world order or at least make useful the debris for those who come later. Only the Destructive Character knows how late it is - as Bargeld warns in *Kollaps* (1981) there is '*nicht viel Zeit.'* Hence, Neubauten became the black-clad, exterminating angels gladly welcoming the Armageddon (1984 not 1933). The cheerful Destructive Character was associated with Neubauten not only because of their philosophy and practice but because Bargeld often cited Benjamin's essay and Chris Bohn referred to it in his written reviews of the band's work (e.g. *The Wire*, April 2000).[59] This cheerfulness and fearlessness (linked with clearance) is constantly present in Neubauten's early work; in *Abstieg und Zerfall* ['decline and decay'] 1981, the words positively declaim: '*wir sind leer, ohne Angst'* ['we are empty, without fear'].

For the generation born a dozen years after the fall of the Third Reich and growing up with the Cold War, the student unrest, the Rote Armee Fraktion and the resulting state of emergency, E.M. Cioran (as already noted) offered an attractive cynicism about leaders and causes in declaring that those who believed in their truth tended to leave behind an earth strewn with corpses. Hence, the appeal, for Neubauten, of such statements as:

> It is enough for me to hear someone talk sincerely about ideals, about the future, about philosophy, to hear him say 'we' with a certain

[58] B. Hanssen, *Walter Benjamin's Other History,* Berkeley, University of California Press, 2000.
[59] Chris Bohn, *the primer* in *The Wire,* April 2000, pp.38-44.

> inflection of assurance, to hear him invoke 'others' and regard himself as their interpreter for me to consider him my enemy' […] every faith practices some form of terror […] no human being is more dangerous than those who suffered for a belief; the great persecutors are recruited among the martyrs not quite beheaded (Cioran, 1998, p.5).

Although Cioran is not consistently featured in this study, this is not to underestimate the influences of his writings on early Neubauten and their contemporaries. His ideas offered many reference points for the group including the incitement for an apocalypse in *Heights of Despair* (1992, pp.52-3)[60] and the celebration of disease and fire (*The Bath of Fire* and *The Beauty of Flames,* Ibid., p.45, p.88).[61] However, for Neubauten, it seemed that Benjamin's Destructive Character offered a balance to Cioran's passionate (and somewhat suicidal) cyncism for this character does not squander energy on uneconomical acts of protest or (self)-destruction but remains in control of self-powers in order to reduce: 'the existing to rubble, not for the sake of the rubble but of the path that extends through it' (Wohlfarth in Benjamin & Osborne, 1994, p.163).[62] Rolf S. Wolkenstein captured a perspective on this

[60] What form an apocalypse might have taken is never explained. There are *poetic* examples in Meidner's painted and Trakl's written, devastated landscapes of 1914 and, with Cioran's *On the Heights of Despair* (1934/92, pp.52/3), these could be interpreted as foreshadowing the decline of the West. Anton Kaes in Malkin (see Chapter 9, introduction) links it to a general desire to start again – *Nullpunkt* -without the guilt of 1933-45. Of course, parents had experienced apocalyptic landscapes in Berlin at *Stunde Null.*

[61] E.M. Cioran, *The Heights of Despair, 1932,* (trans.) Zarifopol-Johnston, I. Chicago, University of Chicago Press 1992.

[62] Irving Wohlfarth, *No-man's land: on Walter Benjamin's Destructive Character* in *Walter Benjamin's Philosophy* A. Benjamin & P. Osborne (eds) London, Routledge, 1994, pp.155-182.

when writing about the 1980s Kreuzberg scene: 'on one hand 'no future' but on the other a pronounced curiosity for life itself' (Monitorpop, 2005).[63]

b. An *angel's-eyed view of history*

(Malkin, 1999, p.25) [64]

Geschichte

Auch sie sind nicht weg

[Hi- stories which won't go away]

(*Grundstück,* 2004)

The previous section has introduced an important link between Benjamin and Neubauten through the aesthetics of positive destruction and the *urmensch*; [65] an 'angel's-eyed view of history' (to borrow Malkin's phrase) provides another because of the much cited use by Benjamin of one of Paul Klee's angel paintings, *Angelus Novus* (1920). Through Benjamin's literary intervention, the angel has come to represent the presence of the burden of history and the loss of faith in progress; no longer a messenger of hope, it has become a melancholic witness (in a godless age) to man's ruination and lost stories 'from the failed French Revolution to the successful mass-murders at Auschwitz' (Malkin, 1999, p.25). Sometimes it is faceless, messageless,

[63] *Berlin Super 80,* DVD/CD/Book, Monitorpop.de entertainment, 2005.
[64] J.R. Malkin, *Memory-Theatre and Postmodern Drama,* USA, University of Michigan Press, 1999.
[65] *Ur*mensch is used here instead of *Un*mensch in order to encapsulate Neubauten's appropriation of Artaud's primitiveness more than Brecht/Benjamin's requirement of 'brutishness' in a new mankind.

meaningless and even dead; as such its presence haunts German art in the second half of the twentieth century.[66]

Siegessäule (Photograph taken by author 10.06)
Paul Klee's *Angelus Novus* 1920 reprinted from www.bibliolab.it

Anselm Kiefer, *Der Engel der Geschichte,* 1989 reprinted from
www.guggenheimcollection.org

In 1921 Walter Benjamin bought Paul Klee's *Angelus Novus.* This image inspired his most famous dialectic - Section Nine of his *Theses on the Philosophy of History* (1940) entitled *Der Engel der Geschichte*. Benjamin's

[66] The examples referenced here are found in the writings of Heiner Müller, the work of the Prenzlauer Berg poets, the films of Wim Wenders, in the dark monumental mourning work of Anselm Kiefer which struggles with gravity and decay, and of course, the lyrics of Neubauten.

interpretation of the child-like, squint-eyed stare of Klee's angel is that it is fixed on the mounting catastrophes of mankind as the storm from paradise gathers. This will propel him back into the future as he seems doomed to only observe the follies of humankind.

The figure of the angel is a very significant one in Berlin. Angels are such familiar features in Berlin's historical architecture that one can even purchase a *Kultur-Karte* of Berlin entitled *Berlin: Stadt der Engel*. However, the most famous Berlin angel (nicknamed Goldelse) who strides confidently in warrior pose on the pinnacle of one of Berlin's key architectural structures, the Siegessäule,[67] is not the angel who permeates post-war German art. This is Benjamin/Klee's helpless, horrified figure or at best, Wenders' 'angel of peace in a city that lives from day to day with the scars and consequences of the warrior epic' *(*Cook in Cook & Gemunden, 1997, p.186).[68] These scars and consequences (which Wenders thought were far more prevalent in Berlin than in the rest of Germany) were, however, never acknowledged by the majority of Germans in 1945 who were conveniently handed a new enemy and a new state of emergency before any atonement or laying to rest of collective guilt could occur.

Clustered around this most cited of twentieth century German angels, are many others in the nation's culture, as well as in Neubauten's oeuvre. Wenders' angels (*Himmel über Berlin/The Sky above Berlin,* 1987*, In Weiter*

[67] A monument much disliked by Walter Benjamin who regarded it as synonymous with Imperial war-mongering. It was moved by the Nazis from the Reichstag to its present position, the Grosser Stern in the centre of Tiergarten.
[68] Roger Cook, *Angels, Fiction, and History in Berlin: Wings of Desire* in *The Cinema of Wim Wenders,* R.Cook & G. Gemunden (eds) Wayne State University Press, 1997, pp. 163-190.

Ferne, so Nah! /Faraway, So Close! 1993) may sit on Goldelse to gaze lovingly and despairingly at Berlin's troubled inhabitants but their intervention (which is dearly bought, post-unification) [69] owes nothing to her triumphant posture. They are only recorders, exiled to the 'worst place in the world' (as Wenders/Handke's film script described post-war Berlin) by an angry God who has abandoned mankind. In *The Sky above Berlin* (in which Bargeld appeared with Nick Cave's Bad Seeds) the scars of the city and its inhabitants are ever present; however, the film is imbued with a spirit of hope which seemed to quickly evaporate in the 1990s as governments failed to seize the unique moment for change provided by the end of the Cold War.

The plight of angels as representations of possible hope pre-1989 and its loss, post unification, is present in Heiner Müller's work. His Cold War angel *Glücklose* ['hapless'] *1*, 1958) [70] is trapped in an historical limbo between the past and the future. A hail of stones buries him in rubble until gradually, the small hopeful sound of wing-beats seeps through the stone. But for Müller's post-*Wende* angel (*Glücklose 11*, 1989) and those of the Prenzlauer Berg poets, Andreas Koziol (1957-) and Thomas Martin (1963-) the over hasty erasure and vilification of the German Democratic Republic (GDR) offered no such renewal or mission. Koziol's angel, significantly called *Der Heinermüller,* is depicted trapped on an escalator; on his back instead of wings, volumes of

[69] When Wenders' filmic angel falls to earth in unified Berlin (transformed into a human being because of his frustration at being only an observer) he finds himself out of his depth in a world of American weapon smuggling and pornography where relics of the Nazi past still lie in the basements and vaults. However, the fall of his 1987 angel has a positive outcome for here love crosses borders and recognises that everyone has his and her-story. Wenders viewed Berlin as pivotal in any world-wide peaceful co-existence (Cook in Cook & Gemunden, 1997, p.127).

[70] This was written on Paul Dessau's request for Brecht's opera fragment *Die Reisen des Glücksgotts* inspired by Benjamin.

utopias (which the angel cannot reach) flap in the wind. Here, in addition to the absence of a Benjaminian storm, there are no ruins only a void in the '*museum westöstlicher langeweile'* ['west-east museum of boredom'] which suggests a very different habitation from that of Wenders' peaceful, industrious library gently surveyed by pre-*Wende* angels. The position of Thomas Martin's *Steinenkel* ['stone angel'] is even more extreme; she lies flattened in her own vomit and excrement with broken, gnawed wings and dried out eyes; she lacks the will to rise so all attempts fail.[71] The dialectic of catastrophe and progress present in Benjamin's angel critique and hinted at in Müller's first *Glücklose* is not present – the angel has lost its power, and, as in the case of Koziol's angel, its '*sehnsucht'* (*Der Heinermüller,* ll.15-16) in '*ein teufelskreis der zeit'* ['a vicious circle of time']. History belongs to the victors not the losers. Müller's second 'hapless' angel also reflects the writer's theory of a post-Wende time dislocation (which is referenced several times in this study).[72] Hence, Müller describes his angel as caught in an abyss between the two cities and the two (hi)stories with an 'alien hand at the lonely flesh' and no face known to the writer (trans. C. Weber, 2001, p.57).[73]

If the above dislocated and abandoned artistic angels are ineffective in confronting the tainted legacy of the Nazi past and Cold War division the

[71] Similar concerns and disappointments are to be found in Neubauten's post-unification work; in particular, *Silence is Sexy* (2000) with its focus on holes and the loss of traces and *Perpetuum Mobile* (2004) where both music and text suggest endless non- departures.
[72] Müller saw the Berlin Wall as a Time wall dividing the slowed-down East from the accelerated West; its removal brought the final deliverance of humanity to the machine world Jonathan Kalb, *The Theatre of Heiner Müller,* Cambridge, University Press, 1998, p. 20. In opposition to Andy Warhol and in sympathy with Joseph Beuys, Müller feared machine dominance and invoked the error in the technological systems as a form of escape.
[73] H. Müller, *A Heiner Müller Reader,* C. Weber (trans./ed.) Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2001. Information on Koziol and Martin is from Karen Leeder's essay, 'Glücklose Engel: Fictions of German History and the End of the GDR' in *Recasting German Identity,* Taberner & Finlay (eds) 2002, pp.87-101 to which this brief summary is much indebted.

angry child of New-Wave cinema appeared more resilient.[74] In Von Trotta's cinematic recreation of the Ensslin sisters' lives in *Die Bleierne Zeit* (1982) and Verhöven's *Das schreckliche Mädchen* (1990) it is the *Nachgeborenen* who demands '*Fang an'* ['begin now'] the explanation about past sins and present action.[75]

In contrast to the haplessness of his angel, Walter Benjamin's Destructive Character's response was more decisive and in excess of a child's demand for '*fang an.'* The Destructive Character's response was a subversive going-down, a mining underground and a blasting out of past ruins which obviously has considerable relevance for Neubauten's anti-architectural music. In the post-1945 artistic context, such a response can be found in a few examples of architectural design concerning memory and warning; hence, these offer an effective link between Neubauten's guerrilla sound implosion and Benjamin's vision of history.[76] The Gerzs' now sunken 'reminder' against Fascism and War in Harburg-Hamburg and Horst Hoheisel's inverted Aschrott Jewish

[74] There was a stark difference in some of Japan's cinematic response. Here fantasy, allegory and animation often predominate. *The Sun* (which like *Der Untergang,* dealt with the final days of (Japanese) defeat in 1945) was made by a Russian director, Aleksandr Sokurov.
[75] The child's-eyed view (as well as the angel's) is present in *Wings of Desire* –only children and ex-angels can see angels and Handke's text opens with 'When the child was a child…' 'Fang an' is used here with the concept of the angry *Nachgeborenen*. Both *Die Bleierne* Zeit, 1982, and *Das schreckliche* Mädchen,1990, explore this issue. Felix, Ensslin's son in von Trotta's *Die Bleierne Zeit,* ends the film by demanding '*Fang an'* concerning the causes of his mother's violent activites. (See Lisa Di Caprio's article, *The German Sisters,* Jump Cut, no.29 February1984, pp.56-59 www.ejumpcut.org/archive accessed 12.08.06.
Another depiction of the child's-eyed view occurs in Michael Verhöven's 1990 film *Das schreckliche Mädchen.* Again, stimulated by actual post-war events, the narrative explores the vilification of a school girl who uncovers the Nazi collaborations of her town's respected elders and leaders. The German cinema continues to depict its problematic past with some honesty: from the cooperative masterpiece on the aftermath of Stammheim, *Deutschland im Herbst* (Fassbinder, Kluge, Böll, Cloos et al, 1978) which argues for the acknowledgement of more than one perspective on the past to Hirschbiegel's *Der Untergang*, 2004, von Donnersmarck's *The Lives of Others,* 2006 and Edel's *Der Baader Meinhof Komplex* (2008).
[76] Although a clearing of space is involved this is not *nullpunkt,* for it is not a wiping clean and forgetting but an implosion of memory as an irritant.

fountain in Kassel are two such provocative monuments which invite active recall of Nazi crimes by effectively using disappearance as an artistic device (Neubauten's *Der Schacht von Babel,* 1996, depicts a similar reverted monument). But the one closest to Benjamin's and Neubauten's ideal, is Hoheisel's unaccepted proposal for the memorial to the murdered Jews of Europe (now represented by Eisermann's maze of stone slabs). Hoheisel wished to divest the public of the obligation to routinely remember by actively and painfully kicking the spectator out of passivity and comfort with a shattered empty space which represented a shattered lost people. He proposed a counter monument by blowing up the Brandenburger Tor (a symbol of Prussian might), scattering its crushed ruins across the gap and covering this dust with granite plates. In this manner an edifice would not be constructed to commemorate destruction.[77] Daniel Libeskind's equally unsuccessful proposal (Bargeld's preferred one) for Potsdamer Platz employed the same principle of creative destruction; he wanted an irregular criss-cross matrix of thunderbolts of absence, an open space based on fragments of buried memories which suggested that the platz was the centre of an explosion.

In their texts Neubauten's angels are initially both challenging children and dead relics; however, later, there is a sense of hope in renewed flight and an angel's-eyed view. In *Engel der Vernichtung* (*Patienten OT,* 1983) angels appear as the disturbing ones of childhood described as '*eingeschlossen in Schlafsaalträume'* ['locked inside dormitory dreams'] of anxiety and hope; one

[77] Hoheisel wanted his anti-memorials to rescue the history of the place 'as a wound and as an open question' (James E. Young); he also provocatively projected '*Arbeit macht frei'* onto the Brandenburger Tor on 27 January 1997.

is slain as '*die Beute'* ['booty']. However, their Angelus Novus (in the same work), woken by the sound of weaponry, floats like a shadow and then cooperates with the text's child-persona to remove God:

... und ich will nicht länger warten

Bis Gottes unendlicher Hoden

Endlich in Flammen aufgeht...

werden mein Engel und ich Gott abschaffen

['…and I no longer want to wait

until god's infinite scrotum

finally goes up in flames…

my angel and I shall abolish the deity'] [78]

Earlier ones (1981) are sent threatening letters as Bargeld [79] contemplates man's (lack of) progress in *Aufrecht gehen* ['walking upright']**:**

but I'm still in training

have been training for a few million years

if only I'd stayed in the sea. [80]

In *Zwölf Städte* (1987) they are always there; they even have eight-digit numbers but really have little to offer even though (they):

die aussehen wie sie sollen

[78] The work is prefaced by broken up snatches of children's voices; the link is made here with the cinematic angel-child who is ready to confront the stowed parental past.
[79] Bargeld as the group's lyricist/singer (and hence, protagonist) is used here and passim, not 'Neubauten' although the latter is also implied.
[80] The lyrics are in German in the original; translator unknown, NBOA copy sourced 10 October 2006.

wie erdacht

wie erfunden

wie ich

['look like they ought

like projections

like inventions

like me'] [81]

They are '*nur widerspiegelnd der zwölf Städte geifernd fernes Licht […] gebrochen gekrümmt/zurückgeschleudert'* ['just mirroring the drooling distant light of twelve cities […] broken bent/hurled back']. In *Haus der Lüge* (1989) they lie dead, strewn around a suicidal god on the attic floor of the house of lies*: 'deren Gesichter sehen ihm ähnlich'* ['their faces look somewhat like his']. Their demise has emptied the skies (and the attic) ready for music as invoked in *Was ist ist* (1996). The angel in *Die Befindlichkeit des Landes* (2000) who Bargeld says, is inspired by Dürer's engraving of the angel *Melancholia 1* (1514), does manage to shake off inertia/despair (as seemingly depicted by Dürer) and rise above the lay of the land. This angel is liberated from what Bargeld sees as mankind's curse, '*Newton's gravitational mania'* (*Was ist ist,* 1996) in order to gaze on man's past and future ruins. She reflects Bargeld's distanced take on his home city; he, too like Wenders' angels, seems to sit above the city regretfully cataloguing its decline into Disneyfied ruins before

[81] Karen Leeder observes that the post-war Geman angels appeared all too human in their fallen 'dead' state (2002, p.87).

the tainted remains of the layered past have been acknowledged (see Chapter 4*).*

The empty skies do, however, have a place for the sonic angel created from layers of treated vocal sounds by Bargeld in one of his *Rede* pieces. He has described this work as playing the alchemist with his own sound-DNA and with that of a passing winged creature encountered outside the venue. The vocalisations are mixed and treated in the live performance until a sonic angel is 'born' and, aided by music's utopian power it flies free from gravity into the empty skies.[82] As this 'being' is always sonically created anew through a 'chance encounter' in each new performance location, it has a kind of wistful, anarchic playfulness much suited to the *Nachgeborenen*, the child (angel) born later: 'To you who will emerge from the flood/ In which we have gone under' (Brecht: *An der Nachgeborenen).*

3: Utopia

> In Berlin, after the wall, it was very nice, it was Paradise…
>
> (Lou Reed, Berlin, 2007: screen version)

During the 1990s Neubauten's earlier anarchy (associated with apocalyptic destruction, Cioran's decay and Artaud's plague) became imbued with more hopeful, gentler, anarchic warmth. This development coincided with the group's ageing, a change in their membership and approach to music, plus a growing dislike of the commodification and formularisation of music (and the

[82] *Rede* [Speech] are solo performances which Bargeld creates with Boris Wilsdorf; see Chapter 7:2 *Decomposing.*

Berlin Republic). As well as sharing the artistic method of re-using discarded, dirty, horizontal and hybrid mixes of broken household and industrial objects, Neubauten share with the German artist, Joseph Beuys (1921-86), a sense of the interrelatedness of life and art and art's socialising powers. Their ideals echo Beuys' desire to see the artist as a mediating figure between present day secularity of experience and an audience's desire 'for any kind of transcendental experience to escape the banality of German reconstruction culture and its suddenly established models of accelerated consumption' (Ray, 2001, p.85).[83] These ideals (which had been present in the artistic DIY communalism of Kreuzberg) would lead to the group's own 'social sculpture' - the Supporter Initiative of 2002-2007. [84] Beuys' belief that everyone is an artist and that 'everyone can and must participate in the social being so that transformation can be carried out as quickly as possible' (Stachelhaus, 1987, p. 66)[85] was particularly reflected in the subsequent Supporter Initiative concert, *Grundstück*, at the Palast der Republik, 2004, which not only involved the attendees in the creating of the music but also in the organisation and structuring of the event.[86]

Neubauten often make use of Beuysian imagery; for example, in the juxtaposition of honey (as the life force) and gravity (lead for Beuys) in holding

[83] G. Ray, *Mapping the Legacy,* Sarasota, John & Maple Ringling Museum of Art, 2001.
[84] This transformation is of the soul, mind and will power; Beuys believed that it must precede any revolutionary step. Beuys, like Benjamin, Artaud and Cage, is key figure in this study; Bargeld, in particular, has expressed much admiration for Beuys as artist, politician and thinker, especially the stance Beuys took against the commodification of art and the necessity of taking money out of art in order to find a more positive way forward (see Chapter 10). There are many shared concerns, the belief in chaos as a positive energy being just one (see *Sehnsucht kommt aus dem Chaos,* 1981). A few key other aspects are selected here but again space prohibits a more detailed discussion of Beuys' relevance.
[85] H. Stachelhaus, *Joseph Beuys*, New York, Abbeville Press, 1987.
[86] Neubauten saw this concert as a 'social act' and a 'few steps toward a small utopia' (interview with author 4 November 2004).

down Man's humanity. The importance of pain in the work is also a shared belief; for Beuys 'nothing happens without pain – without pain there is no consciousness […] We are frozen, isolated, insulated from pain so nothing will happen, no progress; we must break open these chambers' (Stachelhaus, 1987, p.160). Neubauten echoed this in Bargeld's words: 'Something happens within us when we play- someone could be influenced by the pain in us - they could be part of it' (Maeck, 1996, p.49).[87] Early Neubauten may have declared that there was '*nicht viel Zeit'* left for Beuys' belief in the artist's ability to initiate the healing process through shaman-like showing of the wound, but later Neubauten texts do focus the wounds that are all too glibly concealed under the capitalist promise of the forever new (*Youme and Meyou* and *Dead Friends,* 2004*).* However, although such texts are not explicitly redemptive in a Beuysian sense (they cannot carry his sense of guilt for his wartime ghosts) it is possible to read in them, frustration with, and anger about the deferred sorrow and split consciousness of both post-war and post-unification Germany.[88] Many of Bargeld's lyrics reflect the burden of past history (in particular, the albums, *Haus der Lüge, Tabula Rasa*, *Silence is Sexy* and *Perpetuum Mobile)* whilst suggesting that the ruins of new conflicts are piling up.[89] So if the angel is hapless perhaps all one can do (when no longer a

[87] Positive pain is an important performance attribute for Neubauten (see Chapter 5*).*
[88] It could be argued, however, that their 'noise' was redemptive, in its attack on post-war West German Schlager-inspired popular music which all too easily forgot the past for the economic race. It could also be argued that Kiefer's work is as worthy in comparison as that of Beuys in this section; being (almost) born after, Kiefer could afford to be more direct in his attack, e.g. *Occupations of signs*, 1969 which in its deliberate use of a Nazi salute, echoed later punk protest. He, too employs wood, plants, straw, sand, hair, lead and other ephemeral (and hence, decaying) found objects. If space allowed, his work would enhance a study of Neubauten, for example, his dark, charred, scored landscapes which also echo Müller's work.
[89] The *Grundstück* song (2004) reiterates this preoccupation with the past and also the related fear that the past could repeat itself.

child) is work to create a small utopia through music with one's supporters where, as Beuys stated 'everyone is an artist' (Fineberg, 1995, p.234).[90]

Alongside Beuys, Neubauten's later work also bears the ideas of Ernst Bloch (1885-1977) whom Bargeld cited as an influence from the mid nineties (interview with the author, 24 April 2006). Bloch saw in the artistic imagination a capacity for a revolution which could result in the 'overturning of all circumstances in which humanity is a degraded, a subjugated, a forsaken, a contemptible being.'[91] The incomplete and unfinished, *noch-nicht* state of humanity - a condition which Bloch believed had endless possibilities - has become a frequent theme of Neubauten's later texts. Music, Bloch claimed, has a vital role here; he believed it to be the most elusive and unfinished of the arts, able to express 'what is still dark […] music is boundary-overstepping.' [92] Hence, for him, it is the most utopian art and the one most saturated with hope. Bloch saw music as the language of the new *mensch* (who could be Brecht/Benjamin's cunning *unmensch*, Artaud's *urmensch* and Beuys' social, decapitalised, denationalised *mensch*) and, in music's incompleteness, he identified a yearning which he expressed as 'the desire to see Possibility' (Bloch 1985, p.195).[93] Such thoughts frequently occur as a closing idea in Neubauten songs, for example, in *Redukt* and *Ich Warte.*

[90] J. Fineberg, *Art since 1940,* London. Laurence King Publishers, 1995.
[91] J.Brown (no date) *Ernst Bloch and the Utopian Imagination,* www.arts.monash.edu.au/eras/edition_5/brownarticle.accessed 29.05.06.
[92] As above.
[93] E. Bloch, *Essays on the Philosophy of Music,* P. Palmer (trans.) London, CUP, 1985.

The focus on yearning provides a direct link to one of Neubauten's most Beuysian/Blochian works, the choric *Was ist ist/Was nicht ist ist möglich/Nur was nicht ist ist möglich* ['what is is/what is not is possible/only what is not possible']. The song (from *Ende Neu*) which echoes Hesse's dictum about reaching for the impossible in order to obtain the possible, is a list of utopias set out like a form to be filled in with gaps left for audience responses. The scripted ones (which balance musical and social desires) include Beuys' wish for a world house without walls, followed by capacity for inexhaustible dance, mornings without regrets and for '*die Musik muss endlich richtig laut damit uns jemand glaubt'* ['the music really loud at last, so someone can believe us']**.** The work becomes especially potent in the song's rendering by the Social Choir of supporters at the *Grundstück* concert.

Finally, an equally influential figure, both musically and socially for Neubauten, is John Cage (1912-92). His joyful utopian anarchy is not about just objecting to things but about making sure that everything is useful.[94] Cage's anarchy required that 'each individual remain poised between autonomy and connectedness, refusing obstruction of self and others but not refusing interpenetration' (Brooks, 2002, p. 219).[95] Furthermore, much like Beuys, Cage believed that everyone has the potential to be an artist and that art and life are synonymous. It is not only Cage's belief in the humanising and socialising role of the arts which is relevant here, but also his radical ideas for

[94] *Alles was irgendwie nütz* ['Everything that was of use'] is the title given to the supporter-initiated bootleg compilation of work issued in 2006 (see Chapter 10) and Bargeld's justification for his selected 144 dead writers, thinkers, artists and characters invited to celebrate on the godless *Dach* [roof] (see Chapter 9:4b *The Body and Journeys).*
[95] William Brooks, *Music and Society,* pp.214-226 in D. Nicholls (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Cage,* Cambridge, University Press, 2002.

creating, performing and notating music - he is treated in greater detail in Chapter 3.

This chapter has introduced some of the main theoretical strands for the context of Neubauten's work, primarily in terms of their beliefs, values and concerns. It has, however, deliberately omitted any lengthy reference to the ideas of Antonin Artaud (1896-1948) because these, being such a central influence (as cited by the group) and the filter through which Neubauten's performance ideas are put into practice, are examined in detail in Part Two. Similarly, Heiner Müller's work which is thematically (e.g. landscape, memory and mourning) and stylistically (e.g. fragmented layers and bodiless voices) central to Neubauten's development, is explored In Chapter 9.[96] The main argument has rested on a number of over-arching motifs which thread themselves through the very fabric of this study: Architecture (because of the group's persistent use of this) and the role of destruction as Apocalypse (through noise, disease and decay); the Angel-child (as a figure of lost histories and possible redemption) and finally the role of the Utopian ideal in art as an enabler of social change and as a path to a personal possibility, usefulness and harmony.

[96] Nietzsche too, although not cited by Neubauten, has some influence which is discussed in Part Two.

Chapter Two : **KATTRINS TROMMEL**

Germany & Music – Identity, Politics & Memory

How did you come to trade the fiddle for the drum*?* Joni Mitchell, 1969

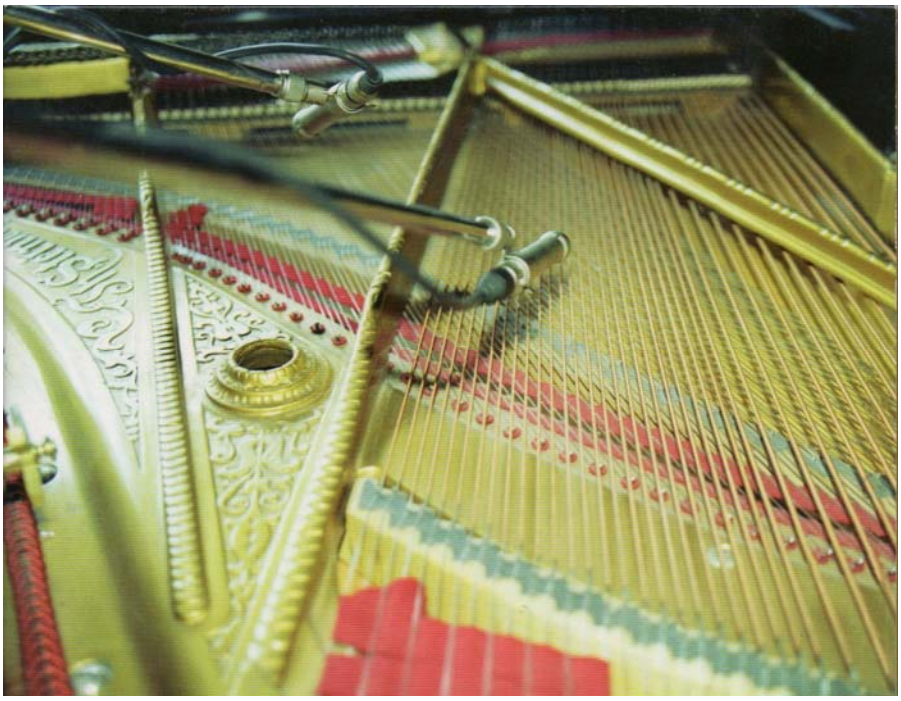

Image from cover of author's *Musterhaus 6* (2006) with permission to use

…dumb Kattrin's martyrdom cannot suffice to account for or offer redemptive possibility to a time so full of holocaust as the twentieth century was and the current one threatens to be

(Tony Kushner, Foreword for *A Heiner Müller Reader,* 2001, p.xv)

Introduction

Das Leben ist kein Irrtum, kein Irrtum und Musik...

['Life is not error, not error and music'…]

(Bargeld, *Ich warte, Alles Wieder Offen,* Potomak, 2007)

This section moves from the broader context of philosophy and the arts (within post-1945 Germany) to focus on music, Einstürzende Neubauten's particular medium. Within this musical context I begin by considering the role of music as a definition of German national identity (their highest art form and source of spirit and *Heimat* and the manipulation of this during the Third Reich and the Cold War years. The discussion then moves into the emergence of an independent German youth music scene as a prerequisite for Neubauten.

The following brief overview of the German speaking nations' perceived special relationship with music owes much to the work of Pamela Potter and Celia Applegate (1998, 2002), Jost Hermand and Michael Gilbert (1994) and Elizabeth Janik (2005); however, it is first important to acknowledge that those discourses pertain to what is understood to be classical music (*E-Musik Ernste Musik*). Neubauten obviously do not belong in such a category – although it is not entirely appropriate to assign them to its binary, popular music (*U-Musik Unterhaltungsmusik*) genre either. [97]

[97] The problem with categorization is approached in Chapter 3; Annette Blühdorn (*Pop and Poetry-Pleasure and Protest,* New York, Peter Lang Pub. 2003) also dicusses the dilemma of *E/U-Musik* in relation to her study of Udo Lindenberg and Konstantin Wecker. Books cited here: C. Applegate & P. Potter, *Music and German National Identity,* Chicago, University Press, 2002, J. Hermand & M.Gilbert (ed.) *German Essays on Music,* New York, Continuum Pub Co.1994, E. Janik, *Recomposing German Music,* Netherlands, Brill Leiden, 2005, and P.Potter, *Most German of the Arts,* USA,Yale University Press,1998.

There is at present, limited material written on German 'popular' music which debates issues of Germanness or the *Nachgeborenen.*[98] What there is suggests the need to consider German popular music separately or differently because its post-war practitioners felt little or no connection with their nation's former special relationship with its music; they were faced with a history and culture tainted by the events of 1933-45 (a viewpoint already expressed in the previous chapter). The unique and paradoxical isolation of West Berlin deep within East Germany for forty years (an important context for Neubauten - discussed in Chapter 4) offers another way of interpreting the separateness implied above. Conversely, the division of Berlin also epitomised (albeit on a small intensive scale) the divided world which was musically -both E and U- represented in Germany (and internationally) on the Cold War battlefields of Darmstadt and Bitterfeld.[99] Hence, an understanding of the activities of the *Nachgeborenen* in pursuing a new, guilt-free German musical identity,

[98] The definition of 'popular' is problematic. Chris Cutler of ReR grappled with this in *File Under Popular,* November Books, 1985; is it 'of the people' i.e. folk music or is it by sales figures percentages? In Germany there are the research institutions, the Forschungszentrum Populäre Musik founded in 1983, the Arbeitkreis Studium Populärer Musik 1986, and the work of Peter Wicke on popular music at the Humboldt University. I have made particular use of the writings of Edward Larkey and Joy Calico (Hermand & Gilbert, 1994/Applegate & Potter, 2002), Uta Poiger (2000), Annette Blühdorn (2003) and David Robb (2007) which consider *Volksmusik,* jazz, the Liedermacher and political song; also consulted is the 1998 edition of *Popular Music* (CUP. vol.17.3) which is dedicated to aspects of contemporary German U-Musik, some editions of *Debatte* but above all, *The Wire* which frequently carries articles on German musicians – especially those working in Elektonische Musik.

[99] Darmstadt was the name given, after its location, to the *Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik;* it began in the post-war years to encourage the exploration of electronic music and European Serialism as safely non-partisan and radically opposed to Eisler's socialist musical culture. It was art which had relinquished any social function, which sought to be nothing but art (Hermand, 1994, p.293). This became known as the Second Viennese School (the first being that of Schoenberg, Webern and Berg). Hermand believes that this music never became widely popular for it remained the reserve of the intellectuals, academia and the public institutions, although it has achieved more consumption in its lowbrow format of Techno. *Bitterfelder Weg* was a GDR initiative which encouraged the artist and writer to go into the field and the factory and the worker into the studio and theatre to engage in each other's skills with art that was meaningful and useful to all. The two locations marked out the battlelines –new form/no content versus old form/useful content. Janik (2005, p. 266) notes that the Bitterfeld Way was ambitious as it reasserted art's capacity as a force of social and political change, and it sought to overcome the gap between experts and amateurs in 20th-century cultural life.

separate from both the tainted music of their parents and the dominance of Anglo-American culture first requires a basic knowledge of the *Sonderweg* ['special path'] (albeit it primarily *E-Musik)* of German musical development.

1: Sonderweg and Divided Music

> On account of bad weather, the German revolution took place in music
>
> **(**Kurt Tucholsky in Appignanesi, 1984, p.97)[100]

Music was not always regarded as the most German of the Arts, to appropriate Pamela Potter's phrase (1998). During the Enlightenment, music played only a subordinate role, with opera (especially Italian) deemed as incredible and unnatural, and instrumental music of little value (being non conceptual and purely sensual). It was not until the 1780s that the middle classes began to regard music as having the potential for the natural and the personal. Beethoven's disruption of some of the court and church chains to realise a more humanitarian music symbolised this. As there was a lack of revolutionary context (unlike in France) in the diverse, separate German states, music became a refuge for the inward-looking, isolated (Romantic) artist as expressed in Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation,* 1819. Jost Hermand (in his introduction to *German Essays on Music,*1994*)* sees this association as assuming even more importance in Germany during the nineteenth century because of its continuing political fragmentation, social inequality, intellectual frustration and the populace's apparent tendencies toward inwardness. Hermand also perceives as important the relationship

[100] L. Appignanesi, *Cabaret,* London, Methuen, 1984.

between philosophy and music. For theoreticians such as Schopenhauer, Adorno, Nietzsche and Bloch, the idea developed that when speaking of the highest aspirations of the German soul and its propensity to yearn for the impossible, musical achievement is invariably cited. The proclamation (1878) by another musician-philosopher, Richard Wagner that the German essence was to be found in music led the argument down a darker, more dangerous route. Sixty years later, Wagner's *Die Meistersingers,* accompanied numerous Nazi political events and, with its motif of the supremacy of holy German art, linked German music with Nuremberg and the death camps. Thomas Mann allegorised the decline into barbarism brought about by Germany's passion for music and its associated conviction of superiority in his novel, *Dr. Faustus* (1947).

During the period of German unification (1870s) and into the twentieth century, the idea of Germany's musical strength gained momentum. First, music represented a mode of artistic expression in which all Germans could share in a nation state which was struggling to overcome a long history of fragmentation and regional differences. Secondly, understanding Germany's musical past and present could lead to a deeper understanding of the German character. The study of various regions with the objective of forming a composite picture of musical Pan-Germanness based on the glorification of folk culture provided another route to the same general outcome.[101]

[101] Herder had coined the word *Volkslieder* in the 1770s which also contributed to the sense of nationalism. Between the tumultuous years of 1924 and 1972 there was a large scale effort to collect and preserve folk music in 44 volumes archived in Freiberg and Berlin and called the *Landschaftliche Volkslieder*.

The second aspect focused in this section is the overt political exploitation and manipulation of music in Germany throughout the 20th century; this created a unique cultural environment which confronted aspiring artists post 1945 and beyond. While in 1918 music helped to serve as a source of national pride at a time of low morale, the conflicts and insecurities of the Weimar Republic (although one of the most stimulating eras of German culture) left many musical institutions struggling financially.[102] In contrast the Nazi government astutely took note of the centrality of music in reinforcing German pride and provided professional and economic security by subsidising orchestras and opera houses. They rescued the declining Berlin Philharmonic as the fully supported Reich Orchestra (Potter notes that its conservative repertoire hardly needed to change) and they salvaged Bayreuth and Wagner (who had gone out of fashion in the late 1920s). Thus the Nazis centralised the Third Reich's control over music and helped to counter any foreign accusations of barbarity. Potter (1998) argues that the Nazis, having understood the importance of highlighting music as incontrovertible proof of superiority, focused on promoting pseudoscientific notions of German racial primacy through the undeniable dominance of Nordic music in the Western world. Even the fact that Germany contained a mix of races because of its central position was manipulated, to prove that Nordic features always came to the fore and that these invariably improved on any foreign strains. (Such reasoning was used to rehabilitate Handel from the English and Mozart from the Italians). Nazi

[102] Potter detailed in *Most German of the Arts* (1998) the unprecedented growth of amateur music-making, through the formation of choral societies and the activities of the youth movement. This, in conjunction with the new forms of entertainment such as radio, phonograph records, vaudeville, cabaret, jazz, threatened the musical legacies associated with the court symphony orchestra, opera house and concert musician and hence, created insecurity which the Nazis could manipulate.

musicologists had no trouble claiming as German the music of the subjugated lands of Hitler's empire. The other major area of propaganda was, not surprisingly, folk music; it could be declared free of foreign influence and hence, could best represent 'original' German music. Consequently by 1944 Germany had more university musicology departments than anywhere else in the world,[103] even though cabaret had been obliterated, jazz halted, youth and folk music appropriated and, as far as had been possible, all foreign and socialist music silenced.

After 1945 however, dismissals, judgements, reinstatements and connivance across the four occupying regions were inconsistent; much depended on collegial support or attack and the vacancy or redundancy for that particular talent or position. Universities were left to put themselves in order and as the Soviets saw the process as a purge, they filled posts with returning communists from exile or prison but the West (as noted in Chapter 1 with the Student Movement) left several important Nazis in office or paid them off with a handsome pension. Those musicians who wanted to continue to practise played down their politics and played up their resistance and secret support of Jewish colleagues. But by 1949 the Cold War was more pressing than pursuing war criminals, especially for the more minor sin of being a collaborating artist.[104] So the politicisation of music continued even more obsessively post *Stunde Null*. Three quarters of Berlin's theatres and concert halls were destroyed beyond repair with their practitioners absent through emigration, genocide, and the demands of war.

[103] Germany and Austria had been path-breakers in music academia for research, cataloguing, methodology; they produced the first journal on musical scholarship in 1904.
[104] See Ronald Harwood's drama, *Taking Sides,* 1995.

Elizabeth Janik (2005) in her detailed account of the immediate post-war years of Berlin's musical regeneration notes that within a year there was an active thriving musical community in Berlin albeit in provisional sites. Much of this activity was due to the Soviets' input which revitalised the arts, especially music. This work was accomplished by Soviet officers who were highly trained academics and linguists, able to create close ties with their German counterparts based on the existing links between Russian and German high culture and music. Janik analyses the propaganda-driven blindness on both sides in the battle for the souls and minds of their respective citizens. She argues that the Soviets were naive in believing that their Kulturbund organisation [105] would be acceptable to the Americans, for an intensification of the Cold War brought the inevitable American ban on the Kulturbund in the western sectors of the city.[106] This meant, that Berlin was no longer dominated 'by a surfeit of opportunity and an unrestricted flow of ideas and personnel' (Janik, 2005, p.167). Berlin's musicians had to make immediate choices between East and West in electing where to teach, study and to send their union dues if they wished to stay working in their city. However, the music being performed was the same; German and Russian music (Beethoven, Brahms, Mussorgsky and Tchaikovsky) were played on both

[105] The Kulturbund was inspired by the anti-fascist cultural leagues of German exiles in the 1930s and was set up by the Soviets in 1945 Berlin to oversee the rebirth of the whole city's arts. It also issued a decree encouraging all Germans to return to found a new German intellectual life and reject National Socialism. Unlike the Americans, the Soviets saw this as a priority; Janik cites similar prioritising of the cultural life in besieged Russian cities during the Nazi invasion (2005, p.105).

[106] The introduction of a new currency by the West also brought the initial post-war cultural revival in Berlin to a halt as it made going to the theatre or concert hall a luxury. Janik notes that one Kulturbund official commented that the West may have reduced the debt but they also reduced German culture.

sides with next to no American music on the agenda despite the creation of America Houses to rival the Soviet Houses of Culture. [107]

So by 1948 (Janik notes) after an initial period of creativity and interchange, the two Super Powers each claimed their approach to music to be the rightful heir of 1933. They both indulged in rigid and incompatible interpretations of their ideas and in the same strategies of exchange visits, guest artists, glowing newspaper reports, generous fellowships, academic interchange and propagandist damning of the 'other'. Since being ejected from the West, the non-partisan Kulturbund had little option other than to serve the SED.[108] Meanwhile the Americans encouraged western artists to cut all ties with the East and began to refashion 'New Music' to de-emphasize its pre-1933 social basis against what they saw as the demons of politically controlled art.

Those émigrés who, in fleeing from Nazi Germany had represented 'good' German music, were now faced with a dilemma; should they remain in exile or come back and if so - where to? Some key artists (Schoenberg, Hindemith and Weill) remained abroad and a large number, such as Eisler, Meyer, Knepler and Dessau (Janik, 2005, p.194) opted for East Berlin. Hence, West Berlin (despite its non-capital status) was required to play an important role in American efforts to win the highbrow culture race. In 1950 it hosted the Congress of Cultural Freedom funded by the CIA to counteract the prominent, international congresses of the Soviet Union's World Peace Movement. The

[107] Janik discusses in *Recomposing German Music* (2005) American insecurities in the face of European high culture but points to its pivotal role in jazz, rock, Fluxus experimental music and the folk revival.
[108] Socialist Unity Party of Germany.

CIA also became the main funders of Darmstadt's 'New (non-aligned) Music' which took the form of the pure abstraction of serialism and electronic, encouraged initially by the American military through the creation of seven regional radio stations. After the foundation of the Federal Republic in 1949 these stations continued to be state-funded instruments of cultural politics and decentralisation. In particular, their championship of serial music was unprecedented in that they provided air time, commissioned work and supported concerts. The radio stations' strategies continued into the 1950s with a similar sponsorship of Elektronische Musik.

In West Germany the quest to define musical parameters took on an air of scientific research which perfectly matched the desire for art without personal expression or ideology and which, as Stockhausen put it: 'contain no thematic qualities at all' (BBC Radio 3, 15 December 2007). The installation of state of the art electronic studios at the major radio stations, in particular in Köln in 1953, made this step possible. Of course in their very apolitical stance, the stations were clearly engaging in an ideological battle with the East who cited all these developments as cultural bankruptcy, continued to promote content over form and hold the view that a composer had a social responsibility to make the latest musical innovations accessible to a broad public.

After the erection of the Wall in 1961 the arts also reflected the intensification of Cold War posturing from both sides; even more abundant subsidies flowed into West Berlin from the US and West Germany. In 1963 the new Philharmonic became a centrepiece of the Culture Forum which was erected

just a few hundred yards from the wall in order to rival the East's Museumsinsel (Janik, 2005, p. 257). The DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) invited –with 'generous one-year fellowships'- (Ibid.) about 30 international artists annually to live in West Berlin and contribute to the city's cultural life; musicians included Cage, Ligeti, Penderecki, Berio, Morton Feldman, Morton Subotnick, Milton Babbit, Xenakis, Toshi Ichyanagi and Cardew who reviews his year, 1973, and the diverse motives of the participants, in *Stockhausen serves Imperialism* (1974).[109] The Wall had also dealt a blow to the East's credibility; the West's former calls for boycott turned into displays of solidarity with those Eastern artists who sought to transcend their government's restrictions (for example, Paul Dessau was elected to the West Berlin Academy of Arts in 1965). Official GDR art, up to the erection of the wall, had relentlessly pursued Pan-German contact and advocated unification; the wall halted initiatives for cultural outreach so there was now a concentration on a distinct GDR culture. However, the late 60s and early 70s saw attempts to integrate a wider range of musical tradition into GDR culture. Janik (2005, p.286) states that 'a generation of American folk musicians toured the GDR' and were warmly welcomed for their stance against their country's foreign policy. This folk revival breathed new life into the amateur music movement which had always been an important aspect of the East German tradition.[110]

[109] C. Cardew, *Stockhausen serves Imperialism*, 1974/2004, www.ubuweb.com ubuclassics, accessed 28.06.09.

[110] The other key Cold War musical player was American Jazz. Because of its Nazi ban, in 1945, it took on a new intellectually and socially acceptable status. Both sides created state-sponsored Jazz Salons although two opposing types of Jazz were championed. There is a comprehensive study of this in Uta Poiger's *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany*, Berkeley, 2000.

On both sides of the wall, the annual folk festivals such as the West's *Burg Waldeck* (1964-69) and the *das Festival des politischen Liedes* (1970-80) in East Berlin provided venues for international singers and an opportunity for artistic innovation.[111] Coupled with the APO and Student Movement, Burg Waldeck helped not only to reclaim the folk song and the political song of Brecht, Eisler and the Weimar cabaret (from its Third Reich distortion and elimination) but also to lay the foundations of a new independent German popular music created by the *Nachgeborenen*. This was aided by the first major international West German rock festival, the International Essener Song Tage. The IEST took place in Essen in September 1968; it was initiated by Rolf-Ulrich Kaiser in an attempt to combine the *Liedermacher* [112] movement (which had become increasingly politicised through its student protest connections) with the new avant garde experiments in popular music. It brought together leading American (Zappa and The Mothers of Invention, the Fugs, Julie Felix, Tim Buckley) and German (Peter Brötzmann, Amon Düül, Floh de Cologne, Tangerine Dream) artists although there was some disquiet over the differing agendas of those there for the music and the more militant (mainly German) participants.

Cultural relationships between the two Germanies (encouraged by Willy Brandt's *Neue Ostpolitik* from 1969 onwards) steadily improved during the

[111] David Robb (ed.) in his Introduction to *Protest Song in East and West Germany since the 1960s,* New York, Camden House, 2007, p.1 stresses that the political song in the GDR was not the commercial industry it was in the West 'but nonetheless [it] enjoyed a similar popularity due to its ambiguous position as either treasured revolutionary heritage or forbidden fruit in a climate of censorship.'

[112] *Liedermacher/*song-maker, according to Blühdorn (2003) was a term first coined by Wolf Biermann to denote, after Brecht's *Stückeschreiber*, an authenticity of a workman who does it all him/herself; e.g. the solo balladeers of the cabaret era from Wedekind, Tucholsky, Mehring, Kästner, Eisler/Brecht/Busch to such contemporary performers as Udo Lindenberg and Konstantin Wecker and in the East, Gerhard Gundermann (d. 1998).

1970s and 80s with both sides expressing a keenness to embrace the characteristics of the 'other' which had been proscribed during the 50s and 60s.[113] By the end of the 1980s musical performances with guest appearances of artists from 'the other side' had become nearly an everyday occurrence on both sides of Berlin.[114]

2: Reinvention

> It's not architectural destruction that haunts us. It's the rift torn in the culture of Europe and especially Germany. The pre-war avant-garde tradition was completely severed. There was no German tradition one could refer to without feeling guilty. That culture which existed before the war is rightly forbidden to us, because of what it led to- or, at best, did not prevent [……] we can only reinvent
>
> (Bargeld in Spencer, 2000, p.207).[115]

[113] Janik expresses this as 'musical détente accompanied political détente' (p. 288) by which she means the diplomatic outreach of West Germany's Social Democratic chancellor, Willy Brandt. His Ostpolitik and '*Wandel durch Annäherung'* ['change by coming closer together'] had culminated in the signing of the Basic Treaty and the mutual recognition of both post war Germanies in 1972.

[114] However, with reunificaton the different accounts of popular culture by the two Germanies initially intensified. The East's musical history had emphasized artistic ability, classical or choir training, educational value and socialist ideals. Hence, those East German musicians who worked in the crossover areas of classical/electronic and sound art (Zeitkratzer, Alva-Noto, AGF) found it much easier to establish a niche in the West than the GDR rock/folk/popular bands like Pudhys, Pankow, Silly or City; Die Prinzen had some success (See Haas and Reszel, '*Whatever happened to…the decline and renaissance of rock in the former GDR'* in *Popular Music,* vol.17.3, 1998, pp.163-190). Perhaps Müller's time loop is not so obvious in the global field of Elektronische. This appears to have been replicated in the 'popular' mainstream branch of electronic music- Techno. Robb cites East German D.J. Paul van Dyk as saying that Techno was the first area in the social life of Germany where unification took place (D.Robb, *Techno in Germany: its musical origins and cultural relevance,* February, 2002, p.132, www.gfl-journal.de/2-2000/robb accessed 09.09.08). There is a parallel with Kosmische Musik's non-aligned response to the 68ers for Techno is free of ideologies, language and, for the most part, corporeality (although the Love Parade could suggest otherwise). Electronic artists hide behind aliases, banks of technology and ambiguities which sometimes seem to flirt with Third Reich parodies (e.g. GAS). There are exceptions – acoustic-electronic Sudden Infant works with Artaudian ritual which foregrounds the body as an extension of the sound.

[115] Spencer, A. (2000) *Kopfarbeit or Theatre in your Head* in *Probleme und Perspektiven-H.M. Bath Symposion*, Amsterdam, Rodopi Atlanta GA NL.1998, pp. 203-221.

The second section of this chapter begins the discussion on German popular music by returning to the issue of its 'difference'. The circumstances of this are summed up by Bargeld's citation above and by Simon Frith's editorial for *Popular Music* (1998, 17/3, p.v.):

> […] German popular music has to be understood differently to popular music elsewhere (because) twentieth century German history has posed German musicians and audiences particular problems of national identity […] what is the relationship of the popular German musical tradition, of the Schlager, to the Nazi period, to 'National Socialism', anti-Semitism and Aryanism?

This certainly reinforces the idea of difference but because there was initially an avoidance of historical responsibility (and the above questions were not addressed) it was the eventual youth reaction to parental evasion of this difference which laid the building blocks of a specific (West) German popular music. Edward Larkey (in Applegate and Potter, 2002, pp.234-50) identifies two early (parental) responses to the cultural vacuum of 1945; the first was to hold onto the traditions of the Schlager and *volkstümlich* music (while avoiding any unpleasant past associations) in order to reconstruct a sense of Germanness; the second was to yield to the pressures of a globally-distributed popular music. Acceptance of the latter implied the widespread adoption of Americanization in German popular music which conveniently indicated both a break with the heritage of a Nazi past and (as in Japan) offered a show of solidarity with the anti-communist alliance headed by the

USA.[116] Both strategies meant that despite a powerful economy and political base, no sovereign West German popular music emerged during the immediate post war years. Larkey notes that any original contributions tended to be trivialised or met with lukewarm praise. What did emerge was the *Durchhalteschlager* ['endurance hit'] of the immediate post 1945 years which offered opportune escapism (much as with the *Trümmerfilm* of the same period) in depicting the German nation as innocents led astray by a few megalomaniac Nazi villains. This was coupled with a self-pitying search for identity which was conveniently resolved by the creation of Trizonesia, the three Western German occupied sectors against a new foe – the East. Hence, one of the endurance Schlagers declares: 'we are still the same old bunch. Even Goethe hails from Trizonesia, from Beethoven's cradle; we know that nothing like that exists in Chinesia […] cannibals we are not' (Ritzel, 1998, p. 306).[117]

Although it was the various efforts of the *Nachgeborenen* in rejecting these avoidance strategies and the English language popular music, Blühdorn argues that the critical potential and political unrest were not strong enough to

[116] Bargeld observed, in the mid eighties, that Tokyo was unlike West Berlin in that it exhibited no past, no ruins and no memory of the war, its defeat and occupation for 'anything pre-1970 was considered old' (Maeck, 1996, p.75). Yoshikuni Igarashi, in his excellent analysis of post-war culture in Japan, *Bodies of Memory* (Princetown USA, University Press, 2000) supports this observation through his examination of what he terms the Foundation Myth, in which the Gojira films of 1954 onwards, play a vital fantasy role in Japan's destruction and American nuclear might. He aptly sums up the situation with: '[t]he storm of progress in post-war Japanese society left even the angel among the debris of history' (2000, p.184). The Foundation myth of Japan's submission to America rests on the metaphor that Yoshikuni works into the famous 'wedding photo' of General Douglas MacArthur and Emperor Hirohito, September 27, 1945.

[117] See Fred Ritzel's *Was ist aus uns geworden?- Ein Häufchen Sand am Meer: post war emotions in popular music* (pp.293-308*)* in the *Popular Music Journal*, vol.17, March 1998 and also, in the same journal, Maechthild von Schoenebeck's *The new German folk-like song and its hidden political messages* (pp.279-92) on post-war fake folk music and its hidden right wing political messages of Heimat.

create an independent German-language rock music until 1967-8 - the most active years of the German Student Movement and the APO; hence, 1967 is often cited as *der Beginn Deutscher Rockmusik* (Blühdorn, 2003, p.135).[118] However, any discussion on this must include an acknowledgement that the so-called Swinging Sixties and its aftermath were perceived as a very different experience for West German youth than for the Brits or Yanks. Irmin Schmidt of Can expressed this thus:

> All the young revolutionaries of 1968 had parents who were either Nazis or had suffered under the Nazis, and the relationship of the parents to the Nazis and of their children to them, was a special German thing, and had a big influence on the 68 Troubles. And for 20 years we had got rid of culture. It wasn't just towns that were bombed, culture was bombed too, and you can't rebuild culture. *119*

Bargeld, born into what he termed (interview with author 5 November 2004) a 'proletariat family,' in Berlin-Schöneberg in 1959 (and hence, only nine in 1968) reiterated this by stating that he felt that he 'had no song tradition as such.'[120] Hence, he summed up Neubauten's musical influences as almost contemporaneous:

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[118] Also see Chapter 1 and Blühdorn (2003) who provides an excellent account of the German protest movement (from the first Easter March of 1960 against nuclear missile bases) and its relationship with the growth of German popular music.

[119] Sourced from www.rarevinyl.net/kraut_rock.html accessed 09.11.06
For the German youth the sixties were not simply a hippy era of guilt-free indulgence in new possibilities or a general feeling of *Weltschmerz* but about cutting out what they perceived as a cancer, to exorcise the past and rediscover a national identity.

[120] There are also strong (German) traces of pre-1933 cabaret, sprechgesang, Expressionism and Dadaism in Neubauten's work. Louise Gray's states (Independent on Sunday, 26 March 2000) 'the band (EN) places itself in an intellectual tradition that doesn't start in 1945.'

> For me EN has two clear antecedents, basically two bands that were always in the back of our heads. They were Ton Steine Scherben and Can - and it is between these two that I think our whole thing happens….and Kraftwerk in their early years have been a major influence on me as well, and NEU certainly, I still think they are totally underrated (*The Wire*, October 1996, p.21).

Here Bargeld has identified two of the main strands of post 1965 German *Populäre Musik* (*Deutschrock*). These were the *Polit-Rockgruppen* who used the German language for a socio-political content with a rock accompaniment and who saw their music as contributing to the political discussion, and the *Kosmische-Motorik* musicians, influenced initially by pyschedelia, jazz, classical and serial music. Their music was mainly instrumental and abstract and they viewed themselves as introverted progressive artists. Both of these can be seen as the initiators of independent German rock music. The *Polit-Rockgruppen* can claim the title because of their use of German lyrics although much of their musical accompaniment remained structured along the conventional lines of Anglo- American rock; whereas the so-called avant-garde groups had a claim with their emphasis on the development of new musical ideas, free from the Anglo-American rock idiom (although their brief lyrics tended to be in English).[121]

American culture (Larkey's second response) was not a new phenomenon in Germany post 1945; it had been there in the 1920s and 30s until its

[121] As a scarred language, German was considered a disadavantage in obtaining a 'hit'. The *Polit-Rockgruppen* used German as a statement of their rejection of such concerns, the Music Industry and the current political conservativism.

development was halted by the Nazis. After 1945, it intensified in West Germany. American Rock and Roll in the 1950s, British Beat in the 1960s and then American folk/protest songs were welcomed by the younger generation, especially in the Adenauer era of rapid restoration, conservativism and economic satiety. Such music (and ideals) suggested a rebellious subculture and identity separate from that of German culture. It was 'natural' Blühdorn (2003, p.135) observes for German groups like the Lords (Berlin) and the Rattles (Hamburg) to sing in English for English was the language of 'pop' and it was untainted. But the seeds of the backlash against this first youthful rebellion were also sown in the 1950s with West Germany's rampant capitalism, rearmament and the deployment of US nuclear missiles on home soil. The Easter Marches formed the ground for the development of the *APO* as the protesters' activities extended beyond Easter and the US nuclear missile bases to encompass the multifarious demands of the *APO* and Student Movement. The political singer-songwriters and bands who grew with this (and were even seen as representatives of the protest) looked back to a hybrid of 'high' and 'low' cultural roots including the cabaret chanson and *Gebrauchslyrik* of Wedekind, Brecht, Eisler, Kästner, Mehring and Tucholsky, and the *Jugendbewegung* ('youth movement') of the early twentieth century.[122]

[122] With the Third Reich's eradication of political cabaret and appropriation of folk and youth music and the post-war mythologically constructed *volkstümlich*, it was not until 1964 with the first Burg-Waldeck Festival, that folk song, cabaret and the political song began to acquire a new, untainted image which could then be adopted by the *Polit-Rock* groups. Annette Blühdorn (2003) offers a useful account of the various Burg-Waldeck Festivals (which took place in the castle ruins), the development of the *liedermacher* movement, its influences from the French chanson and Irish folk song and its politicisation (stimulated by 1960s American protest folk and the political songs of singer-songwriters such as Franz Josef Degenhardt) in *Pop and and Poetry- Pleasure and Protest* (2003); also see Edward Larkey (2002, pp. 234-250) and David Robb (2007) particularly for the conflict between the political wing of IEST and those pursuing more Kosmische music interests.

The second strand referenced by Bargeld developed from the Allied encouragement of apparently non-partisan, impersonal Serialism and Electronic music. This had its roots in Darmstadt, Stockhausen and the WDR stations; it was safely apolitical, foregrounding form over content and hence, in stark opposition to the East's Social Realism, the *Nationaloper* and the *Bitterfelder Weg* initiative. This new music filtered down to the crossover *E/U-Musik* of C(K)luster, Kraftwerk, Can, Amon Düül, Tangerine Dream, Popol Vuh and NEU! [123] This contrast was less obvious in the more diverse and Dadaist, lo-fi Faust, who lived and worked as an isolated commune in Wümme; here they utilised influences from the American avant-garde of Partch and Zappa to French Musique Concrète; with this primitive often zany mix of 'found' music, theatre of the Absurd, Brecht/Weill cabaret and field recordings they 'expanded the cosmic reach of Krautrock' (David Keenan, *Grunts of the Future* in *The Wire,* March 2003, pp.39-45). Collectively, the above musicians created varieties of ambient, instrumental, formalistic sounds with an ethos shaped by an idealistic notion of the power of music and drugs. These sounds both celebrated and expressed caution about the Space Age and technology. Their production involved electrified, modulated, often orchestral instruments and synthesizers with, as already stated, sparse (usually English) words. Despite the use of the word 'collectively' above, a wide variety of work was created, from the stately floating beauty of Tangerine Dream's long complex, electronic suites, Popol Vuh's ecstatic drone,

[123] The Zodiac Free Arts Lab in Berlin, 1968 was the first European venue for popular electronic music.

Kraftwerk's more ironic, urban rhythms, Can's fragmented, electro-acoustic progressive rock to NEU!'s obsessive, fragile, proto-Punk minimalism.[124]

By the late 1970s there were new trends in German popular music of which Neubauten were a part - the urban-orientated post/punk and Industrial/*Neue Deutsche Welle*. *NDW* (used as a somewhat misleading umbrella term) celebrated a DIY culture of the virus and the cut-up (its untrained players being well versed in literature from the Dadaists and Artaud to De Sade and Burroughs); it scorned the professional, the big production and the Music Industry, professing 'non-competent competence' (Russo & Warner, 2004, p. 53);[125] it flirted with the machine as well as with its destruction and its key line was '*Ich will Spaß'* ['I want fun']. Thus it dismissed not only the deferred gratification of the Economic Miracle but also any political or *kosmische* concerns. Selected players from these three strands (which can be loosely grouped under the term *Deutschrock*) are now discussed in more detail in order to provide an immediate, West German musical context for Neubauten. However, it is equally important to note that Neubauten's roots also lie internationally with Russolo's machines, Dada/Fluxus experiments, Schaeffer's Musique Concrète, Cage's innovations and, to some extent, with

[124] Although *Polit-Rock* and *Kosmische Musik* have been introduced as two separate musical movements, the influences on these musicians and their work were not so starkly different with the growth of a youth collective awareness concerning Germany's past and its present troubles. Influential too, were the global environmental issues, the anti-nuclear, anti-Vietnam and pacifist debates and the availability of world (especially Indian and Middle Eastern) music. Robb (2007) points out that the more militant Polit-rockers argued for hanging up their guitars for debate- the divisions in the various groupings of Amon Düül (a commune group initially with connections to Baader-Meinhof) illustrate this as well as some conflict of interests at IEST.

[125] M. Russo and D. Warner, *Rough Music, Futurism and Postpunk Industrial Noise Bands* in *Audio Culture,* C. Cox and D. Warner (eds) London, Continuum International Publishing Group, 2004, pp.47-54.

the Punk-Industrial Art of Britain, America and Japan. (This aspect is developed in the following chapter.)

3: The Two Clear Antecedents and *'fang an'*

a.Ton Steine Scherben

> You, though, when things are moving forward
> so that man becomes a helper to other men
> look back on us
> with indulgence
>
> (Brecht, *An die Nachgeborenen,* 1934-38)

Whether a genuine brand of (West) German rock music began with *Polit-Rock* or *Kosmische Musik* is open to debate, but certainly the political events of 1967-1968 did provoke and support, for the first time, German rock groups like Checkpoint Charlie (1967), Floh de Cologne (1968) and Ihre Kinder (1968) who created songs with German lyrics.[126] This, Annette Blühdorn (2003, p.136) states, was 'an absolute novelty' because previously only the *Schlager* had used German or an Anglo-German mix. The *Polit-Rockgruppen* soon distanced themselves from the *Schlager* singers because of the serious (often strident) political content of their lyrics and the intellectualism which linked them with the *Liedermacher*. This intellectual basis was also strengthened by the university origins of many of the groups who began as student cabaret/left-wing theatre ensembles. Floh de Cologne (students of Köln University) became the best known example of these with their

[126] Many of these political groups had sympathies with, and performed in the GDR (where popular music lyrics were German).

combination of rock, Brecht-Weill *Kabarett* and *Straßentheater;* they are credited with the creation of the first German language rock opera. Their musical satires ranged from national concerns (excessive profit, the on-going presence in West German life of ex-Nazis) to international ones (Allende's overthrow and Victor Jara's murder). Their work (which was always accompanied by homemade posters and revolutionary instructions) is best appreciated by listening to the available recordings of *Fließbandbabys Beat-Show* and *Geyer-Symphonie* (1970-71). Other groups also adopted this style of agitprop theatre rock; for example, Locomotiv Kreuzberg (1972) and Ton Steine Scherben (1970) whose frontman, Rio Reiser, began his performance work in youth theatre groups in West Berlin.

Ton Steine Scherben (TSS) were the most respected of these bands and are regarded as one of the first genuine German language rock groups. Reiser is credited by Blühdorn with cementing the positive connection between rock music and German lyrics (2003, p.139).[127] The group's name translates as 'Clay Stones Shard' indicating both the city's architecture (collapsed or ready for construction) as well as suggesting the post-punk 'return to concrete' movement).[128] However, TSS took a strong anti-Capitalist stance and became the musical spokespeople of West Berlin's left wing. They produced and distributed their own work on their *David* (re. Goliath) *Volksmund* (people's voice) label; had links with the squatter scene, the Rote Armee Fraktion in its

[127] It is TSS (Reiser, in particular) whom Bargeld consistently cites as personal mentors, and an inspiration of considerable importance for Neubauten.
[128] As with Neubauten, there are different interpretations of TSS's name; one is the description given by the archaeologist, Heinrich Schliemann, on seeing the ruins of the site of Troy; another that is a play on the name of the West German labour union, 'Bau Steine Erden'- Construction Stones Earth. '*Ton'*, of course, also means 'sound'.

early days and the Green Party (Claudia Roth, the party's co-chair managed them for a while). Their single *Macht kaputt, was euch kaputt Macht* became a youth protest motto in the early 1970s and *Keine Macht für Niemand* was a familiar graffiti slogan. Reiser preferred to identify with workers' interests than with those of the intellectual left wing and the band were frequently invited to play for political rallies and demonstrations.

TSS's lyrics demonstrated a commitment to a utopian anarchy of Solidarität (*Mein Name ist Mensch,* 1971, *Der Traum ist aus,* 1972) which the group attempted to live out with friends and supporters first in a Berlin commune then in a group-repaired farm-house in Nordfriesland. TSS's instrumental work was never innovative in the manner of Can, NEU! Faust or Neubauten; it sounded like any number of late folk-rock '60 bands. What is prominent is the urgently declaimed idealist lyrics delivered by Reiser's emotional but arresting voice and the band's obvious sincerity. (Bargeld's vocal qualities have similarities with those of Reiser's.) Brian Eno's (1997) observation on Deutschrock reflects this sense of a mission over and above money and fame:

> I thought that the German bands had picked up much more of that sensibility of rock music as slightly dangerous, very urban, on the edge of going out of control […] there was still the sense in them of music as lived philosophy, or played philosophy, the way you worked out your statement about things, which was an idea that was very strong in John Cage. [129]

[129] Eno interview, www.sci.fi/~phinnweb/krautrock/mojo-krauteno.html accessed 03.06.06.

b. Die Kinder der Stockhausen

> The song lies sleeping in the machine…
>
> (*NNNAAAMMM,* 1996)

The second strand (identified by Bargeld) of German home-grown music of the late 60s and early 1970s lies, as already stated, in the avant-garde use of *E-Musik* instruments, electronics and collective-improvisation. The music may have been initially ignited by Anglo-American Psychedelic Rock but with its electronic collages, tape manipulations, minimalism, use of Musique Concrète, precise rhythms juxtaposed with improvisation, monotony and mysticism, it was different. For Ralf Hütter this was the first music to free itself from American domination, to begin the process of reclaiming its own (youth) culture. Another major point which separated *Kosmische Musik* from the Anglo-American pop world and which gave it an intellectual status was its links to the work of Stockhausen and *Serielle/Elektronische Musik* (in particular at Elektronischen Studios des WestdeutscherRundfunk, Köln). Most of these groups did not see themselves as overtly political or as mere entertainers but in line with the *Zeitgeist* of the late 60s and 70s, they moved from political activism to personal, mystical escape - either on the road or through space. This so-called (mainly instrumental) *Kosmische Musik* (Julian Cope credits the origin of the term to Edgar Froese of Tangerine Dream, 1995:12) did reach a wider audience outside of Germany under the name of 'Krautrock'.[130] The musicians' reverent and idealistic view of music's power is vividly expressed by Cope (1995, p.12):[131]

[130] The term, 'Krautrock' supposedly came from an Amon Düül lyric although as with Geniale Dilletanten, there is more than one story about its origin. It was first used in a derisory manner

> Beethoven, their tragic hero, had said that music was greater than philosophy, and communes and collectives of Beautiful and Dutiful young idealists came alive all over West Germany, determined to rid themselves of all memories of their parents' despicable recent history and to lose themselves in the Great Rush to the New Kosmische Musik.

With much of the *Kosmische Musik* there appeared to be a deliberate erasure of memory and body. A pain-free existence was sought (with no experiential history) through repetitive beats, endless drones and purposeless journeys which either celebrated capitalism's defining freedoms of consumerism, choice and travel or tried to flee from them.[132] The robot or post-human machine became one of the leitmotifs of this tabula rasa, a safe locus for a new or no identity.[133] Hence, this music (Serialism, Electronic, Kosmische, Techno) with its use of remote, outer-body, post-body programmed technology, could be seen as the very converse of Arte Povera-Punk-Fluxus-Industrial music which centralised the performing body in an open-ended relationship with the found/created object. The former has been accused of eliteness (even totalitarianism in its programmed state) and lacking in

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by non German music critics but taken up in a more positive fashion within the German music scene itself although I have chosen not to use the term as I understand that many German musicians still dislike it. Its international success owed something to the non-inclusion of German lyrics; however, Kraftwerk did cover every album, from *Radio Activity* onwards, with a German language version.

[131] J. Cope, *Krautrocksampler*, London, HeadHeritage/KAK, 1995.

[132] Müller's *Hamletmaschine*: 'I want to be a machine. Arms to grab legs to walk no pain no thinking' (in Von Henning, *Theatremachine,* London, Faber and Faber, 1995, p. 93) explored similar dilemmas.

[133] In some ways this non-aligned musical state was replicated after 1990 by those Techno artists, both East and West, who sought/seek a reclusive identity of aliases, coupled with rare exposure and ambiguous photo shoots.

usefulness while the latter comes with Cageian socialising credentials (see Cardew's *Stockhausen serves Imperialism,* 1974).[134] But the dichotomy is not that clear-cut; anyone with a computer and sound editing software can be a Techno player today and some sound artists combine the acoustic with the electronic through varying degrees of onstage bodily involvement. The permutations are too diverse to discuss here; however, a brief reference must be made to Kraftwerk - often seen as the godfathers of this music. Their output could be interpreted as offering an uncritical anthem for perfect, endless technology much on the lines of Filippo Marinetti's 1911 essay *Multiplied Man and the Reign of the Machine:*

> We look for the creation of a non human type in whom moral suffering, goodness of heart, affection and love, those sole corrosive poisons of inexhaustible vital energy, sole interrupters of our powerful bodily electricity, will be abolished…This nonhuman and mechanical being, constructed for an omnipresent velocity, will be naturally cruel, omniscient and combative (Troop, 2003, p.120).[135]

This could be a too simplistic analysis; Kraftwerk's games of reclusive masks, android substitutes and album cover allusions to National Socialism, may have been ironically subverting the machine man and techno race – a result

[134] Cardrew cites Serialism as 'definitely elitist, uncompromisingly bourgeois, and anti-people' (1974/2004, p.10).

[135] D. Troop, 'Humans, are they really necessary?' in R.Young (ed.) *Undercurrents,* London, Continuum Publishing, 2002, pp.117-129. Also in Young – Marcus Boon's *The Eternal Drone, Good Vibrations, Ancient to Future,* (pp. 59-69) discusses Lou Reed's *Metal Machine Music,* 1975, as an 'industrial' work and 'a deliberate attempt at negating the human for metal and machine […] masochistic pleasure in depersonalisation and subjugation to sounds of machinery' p.66.

from the ambiguity of 'growing up in industrial Düsseldorf and wanting to recover German concerns' (Kraftwerk, '*We are the Robots'*, Radio 4: 22 November 2007). Whatever the arguments for and against the existence of Kraftwerk's subversive irony (certainly missing from the re-formed group's 2009 disco-pop spectacle), their showroom dummies were a *Nachgeborenen* response, albeit of a different calibre to that of TSS's impassioned protest songs or Neubauten's corporeality and invocation of decay and error but still born out of the same awareness of what Hütter expressed as: 'the living culture of Central Europe (having been) cut in the 1930s' […][136]

Can and NEU! in their respective ways produced more influential and creative (for Neubauten) variations on the theme of *Kosmische* music. In 1968 Can saw themselves as an anarchist community as well as an experimental rock group working in improvisation and sound editing. (Holger Czukay and Irmin Schmidt were both Stockhausen students.) It was Damo Suzuki, their second vocalist (1969-73) a busker from Munich, whose idiosyncratic, freeform vocal range fixed their work as markedly unconventional. Suzuki's diverse vocalisations (which he called the language of the Stone Age)[137] included *sprechgesang*, whispering, growling and howling with surreal indecipherable mumbles all in his own version of English.[138] This vocalisation was set against stark, minimalist noise, utilising synthesizers, cut and paste taping techniques and electronics. Schmidt has commented:

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[136] *Kraftwerk overview,* Colin Buttimer, 2003,www.themilkfactory.co.uk/features/kraftwerk.htm accessed 04.02.06.
[137] Interview with Damo Suzuki, www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Can accessed 11.09.06.
[138] Julia Kristeva's 'semiotic' voice can be applied here (as well as Artaud's intentions for the extended voice) as Suzuki utlises rhythm, timbre, gesture and laughter associated with the child and pre-language states where cries and shouts have significance if no symbolic meaning. With the resumption of his performing career, Suzuki still has a vocal force of incredible power as witnessed at the Triptych Festival in Glasgow, 25 April 2007.

> At first people thought we were totally insane. At that time there was no German rock music- everything came from England and America- so starting with something that didn't sound at all like Anglo-American music, they thought we couldn't play it. They didn't really believe we didn't want to play that way. [139]

Can came from Köln, home to one of the best equipped American-funded WDR stations and home of Conny Plank, the producer and engineer who provided monetary access and studio space for so many of these groups.[140] Klaus Dinger and Michael Rother of NEU! came from Düsseldorf, the home of Joseph Beuys. Both were former members of an early Kraftwerk group which produced the experimental *Vorsprung durch Technik* (1971).Their Fluxus-type experiments in sound metamorphosis (on their three albums) predict much of Neubauten's later metal sonic imaging (in particular, *Patienten OT*). Dinger and Rother used a mix of found natural and urban sounds which included water bubbling, jack hammers, howling dogs and echoing factory rhythms. These were often encased within lengthy song structures that meandered, off-key, were barely articulated at times and lacked any declared narrative (e.g. *Lieber Honig)*. Bohn summed up their unpredictability by stating that their

[139] Can: www.sci.fi/~phinnweb/krautrock/mojo-can.html accessed 10.09.06.
[140] Plank was the only link between these diverse bands as, for the most part, they were unaware of each other's work and were in no way, a 'movement' ('*Krautrock: the Rebirth of Germany'* BBC TV 4, 23.10.09 at 21-23).

Motorik music did not sell the illusion that liberty equalled no speed limits (Bohn, 2002, p.146). [141]

Although Faust are not specifically mentioned by Bargeld in the previous citation (he did refer to them in interview, 7 November 2005 as influential but not for him personally) I would argue that this group can be seen, in many ways, as the bridge between the previous *Kosmische* artists and Neubauten's painful, dirty, error-ridden found sound.[142] Faust were formed from six 'drop out' musicians in Hamburg who persuaded Polydor and Virgin (getting into the 'belly of the beast' as Keenen expresses this subversion: *The Wire,* March 2003, p. 39) to allow them to go into retreat in an old schoolhouse in woods south of Hamburg (Wümme) in order to produce an album. This 'utopian social and musical project' (Ibid.) may not have endeared the band to the majors but it did result (in 2000) in Chris Cutler's research box set of five works, *The Wümme Years, 1970-73* (ReR).

During their brief lifetime (they have since reformed with two original members and their own *Klangbad* label) they worked with a cut and paste collage of guitar, drums, sax, electronics, pinball machines, metal, cement mixers, jack hammers, sanders, television broadcasts, tin cans and exotic vocalisations of

[141] C. Bohn, *The Autobahn goes on forever* in *Undercurrents,* R.Young (ed.) London, Continuum, 2002, pp.141-152. The three albums of NEU! and in particular, Klaus Dinger are frequently celebrated but as with Neubauten, have stimulated no lengthy study. Cope states (*Krautrocksamplar,* Chapter 5*)* that Dinger had a direct influence on Bowie and Johnny Rotten (e.g. *Hero* and *Back to Norway*) and affected the future of music. Bohn has expressed similar views and both Sonic Youth and Stereolab cite NEU! as a major influence. BBC TV4's *'Krautrock: the Rebirth of Germany'* (23 October 2009) did make some acknowledgement of this.

[142] This linkage removes Neubauten from the doubtful position of being part of a punk backlash against political/cosmic prog rock and places them in the arena of Dadaism, Schaeffer's musique concrète and Cage.

surreal, multi-lingual lyrics. The resulting music is different from that of Neubauten but what marks out Faust and connects them to Neubauten is their energetic, playfully physical and extreme performances (still present in their 2006 re-formation), with the musicians fully engaged with their instruments, both traditional and 'found,' and their edgy risk-taking approaches to researching music.

4: Zurück zum Beton

['Back to concrete']

> fast production for the fast republic, dying daily means living for the moment…
>
> (DAF, *Die Kleinen und Die Böse*, 1980)

German Punk (or *Neue Deutsche Welle* as Albert Hilsberg termed it) was short lived, lasting from 1977 to 1983. It started as underground music played and disseminated by young amateurs in the big cities like Hamburg, Düsseldorf, West Berlin and Hannover. Klaus Maeck, the Hamburg punk producer/writer and, until the Supporter Initiative, manager of Neubauten,[143] described the punk scene in Hamburg as offering more radical and creative answers for his (post-68) generation than any political affiliation could (telephone interview with author 15 March 2007). Similar to that in other Western cities, the scene was based around squatters' houses with empty shops providing outlets as well as spaces for recording, living and meeting. Maeck stressed that no-one was a professional; decisions were driven by enthusiasm, energy, drugs and a commitment to the ideals of DIY art as life.

[143] Maeck is now the co-manager of Freibank with Chung.

For a brief period in the late seventies, the music retained its independence, amateurism and anger until it was absorbed into the commercial scene, thus bankrupting independent outlets such as Maeck's *RipOff* and Albert Hilsberg's *ZickZack* (which had released *Kollaps)*.

Hilsberg invented the term *Neue Deutsche Welle (NDW)* to encompass a range of performers who all used the German language, for although the movement had its roots in British punk and the U.S. No-Wave, the different sound and rhythm of the German language gave it an original and distinctive style. The use of German is cited by Maeck (15 March 2007) as of vital importance in readdressing the supremacy of Anglo-American popular music and in giving German youth a sense of identity. It also afforded the musicians more direct expression, a greater use of irony, parody and satire and the ability to develop an accompanying sub-culture. Maeck concluded that from the 1980s onwards, the German music industry gradually appropriated the movement, which then descended into the triviality of the *Schlager*, until the name *NDW* could be applied to any artist using the German language even if the music was not part of the original ethos; this led to many musicians, like Neubauten, shunning the name.

Jurgen Teipel's compilation of interviews and music by the key Punk/NDW players, *Verschwende Deine Jugend* ['Waste Your Youth' – 2002] [144] is a valuable resource as a double CD and book. Teipel states that this music had no homogenous form, apart from 'getting up, having a go and being different'

[144] J.Teipel, *Verschwende Deine Jugend,* Frankfurt am Main, Suhrkamp 2001 & *Verschwende Deine Jugend* (2002), compilation CD, Hamburg, UMG.

(email communication with author 20 October 2005). However, there was a shared fascination with all things concrete, urban and industrial. *Zurück zum Beton* (the title of this section) was first used by S.Y.P.H. who, having formed in 1977, are often regarded as one of the first German punk bands.[145] Thomas Schwebel of the group explained in the CD notes of *Verschwende Deine Jugend* (2002) that concrete was:

> Die Antwort auf das 'Zurück zur Natur' dieser Grünen-Bewegung, die ja zur gleichen Zeit entstand. Diese Landkommunen und wallenden Tücher waren für uns das Letze[....] leckt mich am Arsch mit eurer blöden Natur!
> ['The answer to the 'going back to nature' of this Green Movement that originated at the same time. These country communes and swirling cloths were the end for us [...] lick my arse with your stupid nature*!*'] [146]

Many examples of this urban focus can be found in *Verschwende Deine Jugend*'s CD selection: for example, Pyrolator's *It always rains in Wuppertal* which positively accepted the machine-dominated environment as *Industrieromantik* while criticising the Hippies for saying that *Maschinen sind böse* ['machines are ugly']. Abwärts, however, on their two albums,

[145] *Zurück zum Beton* was also used as the title of a multi-media exhibition on the groups at Düsseldorf Kunsthalle in 2002, which included a Neubauten exhibit, Unruh's first debris-built drum kit.
[146] Concrete can also be understood in relation to Pierre Schaeffer who originally used the term to mean work undertaken by an amateur explorer who was working directly with sound material and not through notation scores, performers or conductors. It is not possible to say whether the *Zurück zum Beton* artists were fully conscious of this meaning; however, SYPH's inclusion of concrete being 'where a man can still be a man' does suggest an ironical stance. Alex Hacke has confirmed that often ideas and experiments were pursued in an improvisatory manner and only later did he and his fellow musicians discover the prior theory and practice of expert-others (interview with author 16 February 2007).

Amok/Koma, 1980 and *Die Westen ist Einsam,* 1982, offered a more complex and ironic critique; their *Maschineland*'s mocking 'autobahn lalalala' on *Koma*'s seite two ends abruptly in smashing glass; it mirrors *Unfall* ['accident'] on *Amok's* seite one which describes green asphalt and blood red dreams. *Mehr's* ['more'] lyrics are collaged onto a map of West Germany littered with electronic consumer 'goods' while its counter track, *Karo* rasps out punkish sentiments of negativity and misanthropy. Abwärts' sleeve designs, using photographs, advertising collages and comic book art are similarly thought-provoking.[147]

Verschwende Deine Jugend includes some ephemeral *Schlagers* (e.g Der Plan's *Da vorne steht 'ne Ampel'*) which are rendered in an Anglicised German pop-speak; these two minute ditties help to highlight the quality of the Neubauten, DAF, Mittagpause, Mania D and Abwärts' tracks. There is also the more experimental work of Frieder Butzmann whose environments of feedback noise and tape loops suggest early Steve Reich and of Die Tödlich Doris (part of Geniale Dilletanten with Neubauten) whose contribution uses spoken narrative set against unrelated noise and saxophone.[148]

[147] Abwärts, whose name translates as 'going downwards' (suggesting shared ideas of entropy, abjection and collapse) were an influential Hamburg group of this period but they never received any lasting critical acclaim or success; Chung and Einheit's desertion to Neubauten, in effect signed their dissolution after two albums, *Amok/koma,* 1980 and *Der Westen ist Einsam*, 1982. Matthew Jefferies (Manchester University, German department, interview with author 11 November 2005) who was researching the *Neue Deutsche Welle* during 1983-4 suggested that Abwärts were a superior group in the Hamburg Punk scene. Both Maeck and Chris Bohn have expressed similar opinions.

[148] DAF, Mittagpause and Abwärts were the three groups selected by both Bargeld and Gudrun Gut as influential on their own work. Bargeld also mentioned the American band, DNA (see Chapter 3:2 *Industrial Punk*).

Another compilation, *Als die Partisanen Kamen* ['When the Guerrillas came'], Zensor, Berlin, 1979-83, from the same period offers a similar balance of trivia and unusual tracks; examples of the latter include a mutated cover of the Rolling Stones' *Satisfaction* by Neubauten and Sentimentale Jugend which puns on Joseph Gobbels' infamous 'Do you want Total War?' more work from Butzmann and the provocative *Hiroshima* by 15 year old Alexander Hacke (then Borsig) with its long siren opening and ironic lyrics ('we were decaying, hugging each other, being so happy, how beautiful it is') called out against a waltz 'melody'.

The two groups whose work offers direct links to Neubauten and who retain a distinctive quality are the above-mentioned Abwärts, with their varied percussive noise and Frank Z's extreme voice and lyrics of punkish parody and alienation, and Die Tödliche Doris. Despite diversity and individuality, neither of these bands has received recognition in popular music critiques. Die Tödliche Doris particularly excelled in Dadaist energy and craziness, one aspect of which was their elusive relationship with their audiences. While Neubauten quickly established a strongly declared style identified by their logo, Doris intentionally veiled themselves in disguises and games. (Their logo, an inverted version of *Sparkasse*'s, suggests a question mark.) The 1986 *Liveplaybacks* album demonstrates this playfulness; the gig was played live once and recorded; then at each succeeding venue across mainland Europe, the group mimed to the playback which in turn was recorded with the new sounds of that respective audience. The process (which suggests Lucier's *I am sitting in a room, 1970*) is repeated until the last track consists of

seven auditoriums at once while the original music is a distorted and blurred noise in the background. A later example of this deliberate deconstruction of their material occurred with *Gehörlose Musik* ['Deaf Music'] in which their 1981 album ' ' was transposed from an aural to a visual state by being performed entirely in sign language by two signers for the deaf at the Volksbühne in Berlin (November 1998).[149]

This chapter has discussed the German musical context for Neubauten and in doing so a sad irony has become apparent; the Germans strove so diligently to make music an integral part of their national and spiritual identity only to have the events of 1933-45 pervert this achievement. The effect of this perversion is important to any study of post-war German culture. The fact that Deutschrock, and hence Neubauten, came out of that unique, historical context must be taken into account. I have also reiterated the significance of the 1960s protest movements (introduced in Chapter 1) for the development of this specific German-language music. Neubauten however, are working in an international medium and it is not useful to look solely for what is 'definitively German' (Brinckmann in Dax, 2005, p.182) about their work, although it is important to acknowledge their successful employment of the German language as an effective idiom and the part they have played in the (under-estimated) contribution of Deutschrock to the development of contemporary experimental music. The next chapter hence, discusses Neubauten's roots and place in some of contemporary music's international

[149] Chris Bohn's *Once Upon a Time in Berlin* in *The Wire* (July 2006, pp.22-27) offers an analysis and a celebration of Doris' work and achievements.

developments and continues the debate about their problematic categorization.

Chapter Three: **DER LÄRM UND DIE RUHE**

Reconstruction of Russolo's Intonaurumori, Estorick Collection, London, October 2006
(Photograph taken by author, 10.06)

I stand by noise...

(Krieg in dem Städten/Steh auf Berlin 1981 – tools/metal plates/scratching metal/smashing glass)

Endlich, unendlich, in **RUHE** gelassen aber beweglich frei, zu **LÄRMEN**, ohne schuld!

['Finally, finally, left in peace, free to make noise without guilt!'] (*Redukt*, 2000)

Introduction

Neubauten have over the years, developed a distinctive soundscape of complex polyrhythms and environmental noise which, with the compound word strings of the German language and Bargeld's diverse use of voice,

gives their work a complexity which makes possible a variety of experimentation and affords them a unique sound, very different from Anglo-American rock as well as from their German contemporaries. Hence, in this chapter I have selected three key innovators of the twentieth century (Luigi Russolo, Pierre Schaeffer and John Cage) who have had a direct influence on Neubauten's techniques; these sound artists have helped to question the fundamental structures of Western music - to 'liberate' and to 'organise' sound as Varèse stated (Cox & Warner, 2004, pp.17/21)[150] and 'to violate the traditional tenet of creativity- namely that the artefact must be a pure expression of the artist's will and talent' (Howe, 2008).[151] First, however, the discussion focuses on certain aspects of noise-music – a categorisation associated with the above three 'sound-organisers' and often applied to Neubauten.

1: Sound- Organisers

> Music is castrated noise
>
> (Dror Feiler, Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival programme, 21-30 November 2008, p.67)

Noise is an unavoidably pejorative term which defies any simple definition. Paul Hegarty (2007, p. 3)[152] states that noise is 'a negative reaction […] to a sound or set of sounds.' This is neatly (and somewhat ironically) countered by

[150] E. Varèse, *The Liberation of Sound* in *Audio Culture,* Cox & Warner (eds), London, Continuum, 2004.
[151] www.philipjeck.com – taken from Brian Howe's review of Jeck's *Sand* and of particular interest because it suggests the divide between musique concrète and Elektronische musik.
[152] P. Hegarty, *Noise/Music,* London, Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd. 2007.

Masami Akita (Merzbow in Cox & Warner, 2004, p.4) with – 'if noise means uncomfortable sound, then pop music is noise to me.' Paradoxically, Attali (1977/2006, p.111)[153] stated that popular music is the complete silencing of noise. This demonstrates some of the difficulties involved in attempting to define Noise because any such subjective definition is too idiosyncratic and reliant on cultural-historical experience and political viewpoint to be of discursive value. Another approach toward a definition perhaps lies in the word's origin; one root refers to the Greek word 'nausea' which indicates both the roar of the sea and sea sickness. From this source derives the other common German word for noise - '*Geräusch'* (sometimes used by German groups: e.g. Abwärts, for *Amok/koma,* 1980). This, in turn, relates to '*rausch'* (ecstasy, intoxication) and hence, could suggest the aesthetics of noise in music and its bodily effects, as with 'nausea'. The ecstasy of noise-music is usually depicted as a Dionysian experience during which individuality is abandoned and the limits of the senses are exceeded. Deprived of any mimetic content this noise is a felt physical force.[154]

Jacques Attali affords noise more purpose. He (*The Wire,* July 2001, pp.70-73) stated at his Ether talk, May 2001 that noise is an interruption of dirt,

[153] J. Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music,* 1977*,* (trans.) B. Massumi, B. Minneapolis: University Press, 2006.

[154] Dominic Symonds' paper *The Corporeality of Musical Expression* (Studies in Musical Theatre, 2007 v.1.2, pp.167-183) although written about Bruce Naumen's *Raw Materials* (Tate Modern, London, 2004) has relevance for the type of experience being described here. Symonds cites Taylor (2006: Studies in Theatre & Performance 26:3, pp.289-96): 'sound is a physical phenomenon in space that does not only enter the ears, but that interacts with the space and communicates about it, creating an atmosphere that is both communicative and corporeal. Through the impact of vibrations on the receiving body, sound is perceived as a gesture or touch that is impossible to 'avoid.' The highly energetic, theatrical, long sets of extreme visceral physicality and quirky experimentation associated with Japanese noise and its fluid collectives of the musicians (e.g. Haino, Merzbow, EYE, Acid Mothers Temple, Makoto Kawabata) provide relevant examples of this more extreme experience; however, Neubauten's sonic operations often contain so much texture that the incommunicable seems to communicate.

disorder and pollution and acts as aggression against the transmission of code-structuring messages; culturally, it is both blasphemy and plague; biologically, it is pain. Thus, he assigns to it revolutionary qualities, especially as he argues that music, like politics, is a matter of organising dissonance and managing violence. Originally, any interruption as distortion or fuzz in the transmission, would have been (and in many mainstream situations still is) judged as a malfunction. But twentieth century experimenters have, in various ways induced these errors, hence moving the negative of impurity and irregularity into a positive desired force as a key aspect in their emancipation of sound. This insertion of error was initially intended to be subversive (the rip or hole, the declared stitching, the collage or non-phoneme) against the perfection sought by bourgeois culture. However, as Attali notes, many of these devices have become kitsch and absorbed into commercial marketing, so too, the musical glitch has become domesticated.

Despite this, noise resulting from malfunction remains a useful descriptor when considering post-punk's preoccupation, in the late 70s and 80s, with the desire to work with those materials (objects, sites, behaviour) which were denoted by society as abnormal and irrational. This, linked with the (above noted) relinquishing of will and foregrounded skill, helped to provide a reaction against the mainstream acceptance of 'clean' electronic and synthesiser music; it signified a return to Russolo and Schaeffer and to sound wrought from the debris of urbanism- from home-built percussion, appropriation and sampling and lo-fi electronics; for example, Philip Jeck's lyrical noise created

with antique Dansette record players and junk shop records or Bruce McClure's minimalism with found reel to reel film projectors .

In his 1913 manifesto, *L'Arte de Rumori,* Russolo suggested that music must embrace the new sounds of the industrial age for modern man had the extended capacity to appreciate such sounds. Hence, his work and that of Varèse, Schaeffer and Cage, in expanding the possibilities of sonic art, provided the building blocks for Neubauten's experiments in environmental sound and self-made instruments. It is from the collective thoughts and experiments of these pioneers that I borrow the more useful expressions 'organised sound and worker in rhythms, frequencies and intensities' (Varèse in Cox & Warner, 2004, pp.17-21) and prefer these over noise and noise-makers.[155] John Cage also highlighted this terminology in his most influential lecture -*The Future of Music: Credo,* in Seattle, 1937:

> [...] we can compose and perform a quartet for explosive motor, wind, heartbeat, a landslide. If this word, music, is sacred and reserved for eighteenth and nineteenth century instruments, we can substitute a more meaningful term: organisation of sound
>
> (Kostelanetz, 1991, p.54).[156]

In terms of *what* is being organised Genesis P-Orridge (on reading John Cage's *Silence* in the 1960s) commented:

[155] John Zorn (Cox & Warner, 2004, p.3) has pointed out that Varèse's concept of an 'organiser of sound [….] is probably more valid today than in any previous era.'
[156] R. Kostelanetz (ed.) *John Cage. An Anthology,* 1991, pp. 54-57.

> Music was organised and assembled sound and that was as far as you could go with a definition. You can assemble it anyway you want and you can use any sound you want. It can be as abrasive or as melodic as the culture chooses and, of course, every culture considers different sounds to be melodic. There are no rules
>
> (Ford, 2007. p.17.8).[157]

However, one common aspect does emerge from this seemingly open-ended debate - that is the need for a (new) art of listening. LaBelle (2006, p. 224) sees as irrelevant any talk of noise signifying revolution or change. He argues that as a musical language, it is a pure drive away from heralding anything; it has more to do with close listening to the operation, the mechanics at work in the system not for the sign. Listening is pivotal to Neubauten's work; the mode of listening the group seek has similarities with Pauline Oliveros' 'deep' and 'inclusive' listening and 'listening to listening' (Ibid., p. 158). By this she infers that the listener has the possibility to focus at any time in any direction*:*

> As a means of cartographically locating sounds, their possible sources, and their meanings, not entirely as communicable message, but as an environmental condition (Ibid). [158]

[157]S. Ford, *Wreckers of Civilisation, the story of Coum Transmissions and Throbbing Gristle,* London: Black Dog Publishing, 2007.This comment echoes Debussy's much earlier statement that 'any sounds in any combination and in any succession are hence forth free to be used in any musical continuity' (Michael Nyman, *Experimental Music,* Cambridge: University Press, 1999, p. 49).

[158] One of the attractions of Neubauten often cited by supporters is a fascination with deciphering the sources of, and the structures associated with, the band's sounds.

Close listening today to Cage's percussive use of 'a *Prepared Piano'* (1942-47), the collaged fragments of sound and treated voice in Schaeffer/Henry's *Symphonie pour un homme seul* (1950), Varèse's discordant electronic composition *Déserts* (1954) or Stockhausen's *Gesang der Jünglinge* (1955/6) may not be the dislocating, challenging experiences they must have been over half a century ago; however, these works still require, and reward Oliveros' cartographical approach as does, in a slightly different context, Neubauten's *Kollaps* (1981) and the *Musterhaus* series (2005-07). *Kollaps,* which Neubauten intended to be unlistenable (or at least, to be listened to in pain) now sounds almost familiar in the wake of similar experiments, although never comfortable or predictable. Hence, the importance of the recipient's willingness to work at the art of listening not for correct meaning but for each sound's potential. This is what Barthes called in *The Responsibility of Forms* (1991)[159] 'listening that speaks'. Here the subject is compelled to renounce his inwardness and listening is opened out as 'active, outspoken and articulate' (LaBelle, 2006, p.17). This is a vital ingredient in defining Neubauten's area of sound organisation for 'they [the audience] are in fact doing it [the music]' (Ibid.).[160]

To summarise at this point; the affective aspect of noise as a purely bodily-based experience for both participant and recipient (as with much of Japanese noise) has some credence in defining Neubauten's sound. The revolutionary

[159] R. Barthes, *Responsibility of Forms,* (trans.) R. Howard, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1991.
[160] Jessamy Calkin, tour manager of Neubauten during the 1980s has explained how important it was for the group that each tour venue played had the capacity not just for volume but for the subtleties and shades of silence and small sounds for the recipient to appreciate and understand (interview with author 15 July 2008).

aspect inciting disorder and imperfection (which has to some extent become marketable) remains in Neubauten's process as *der Fehler* (through both intent and chance) as it can facilitate unanticipated sonic possibilities (also see Part One-Prologue and Chapter 9). But the expectation of deep listening which encourages the art of listening not just within the musical experience but also in the wider context with its connotations of social and personal change – this is most appropriate for Neubauten for it implies that the listener is a partner – acting upon and not just acted upon (LaBelle, 2006, p.159) as in the above quotation from Barthes (also see Chapter 10 - the Supporter Initiative).

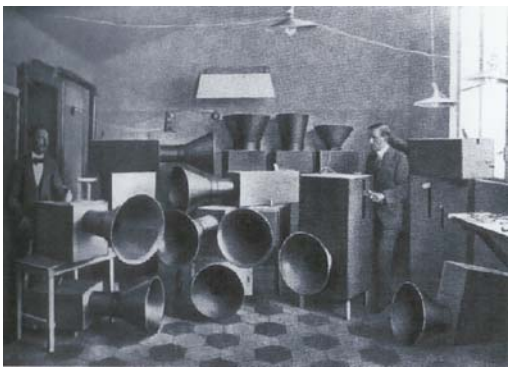
P-Orridge's definition of the eclectic assemblage of sound (referred to earlier) owes much to two twentieth century developments. These were the search for new instruments and new forms of orchestration and the use of environmental (often urban) found sound.[161] Two available recorded examples of this early experimentation are: first, the faithful reproduction of three minutes of Russolo's *Awaking the City* (1913, LTMCD 2301:2000) played on reconstructed Intonarumori. [162] Here the crackling hybrid sounds gives the listener a glimpse into Russolo's music for a new industrial age.[163] Secondly, Pierre Schaeffer's loop-treated steam engine noises from *Etudes aux*

[161] Expressionism, which had developed from the subjectivity of Romanticism, was exploring urbanity too but through the alienation and angst of the dark side of city life which gave rise to distorted melodies, fragmented rhythms, discordant harmonies and a graphic, quasi-hysterical atmosphere (e.g. Schoenberg's 1912 *Pierrot Lunaire* and Berg's *Wozzeck* 1914/22).

[162] The Intonarumori were built by Russolo in 1913 as 16 different manually operated, noise machines. In November 2009, Bargeld composed for and performed in *Music for 16 Futurist Noise Intoners.* This concert consisted of 16 original works by 16 musicians for reconstructions of Russolo's Intonaurumori at New York Town Hall (directed and curated by Luciano Chessa). It emphasized how quiet and minimal Russolo's 'noise' machines could be.

[163] Pauline Oliveros (for the above mentioned concert) paid homage to this work with her composition of 'waking' the Intonarumori.

Chemins der Fer (1948, l'œuvre musicale, INA, 2005) which offers an excellent example of Musique Concrète. Both Russolo (1885-1947) and Schaeffer (1910-95) can be regarded as forerunners of *Geniale Dilletanten* ('amateur geniuses') for one was a painter who delighted in his lack of musical knowledge and the other was a radio operator. Both worked to extend music beyond the traditional orchestra into the industrial age. Russolo argued that the traditional orchestral instruments and manners of composition were no longer capable of capturing the speed, energy and noise of modern life: 'the motors and machines of our industrial cities can one day be given pitches, so that every workshop will become an intoxicating orchestra of noise […]' (Russolo in Cox & Warner, 2004, p.14). Music would be created by and for non-musicians (as Genesis P-0rridge described industrial music in the 1970s). On the VHS recording of *Liebeslieder* (1993) Neubauten pay homage to Russolo's work with *Blume* (see Chapter 5:6 *Neubauten's Tanztheater*). In 2007-08 they acknowledged him again with the album artwork and set design for *Alles Wieder Offen.*



Blume videoclip from *Liederslieder* VHS (Maeck, 1996, p.126) & Russolo and Piatti demonstrating the Intonarumori, www.zakros.com/mica/soundart/f02/futurist.html accessed 27.04.06.

The cover sleeve of *Alles Wieder Offen* image from author's album, with permission (designed by Mote Sinabel, 2007)

The pioneering work of French radio operator Pierre Schaeffer is encapsulated in the tape recorder and his accidentally created a '*sillon fermè'* which he believed to be so 'radically opposed to the logic of all known musical discourse, that it dictated a new starting point' (Goran Vejvoda & Rob Young, 2005, p.45).[164] From this starting point, Schaeffer's experiments with found and prepared objects, recording delay, volume, looping, mixing and deracinated noises have laid the building blocks of Sonic Art.

Schaeffer was fascinated by the concept of the fragment of sound 'isolated from any temporary context, crystal of time with sharp edges' (Ibid., p. 45) and preferred what he called '*acousmatics'* – (reduced listening) the hiding of the sound source so that the performer and instrument are replaced by a darkened room, speakers and a mixer: hence, the sound is an object in its

[164] G.Vejvoda & R. Young, *My Concrete Life* in *The Wire,* August 2005, p. 45-49.

own right. Although this latter intention is dissimilar to that of Neubauten's performances, the group share many of Schaeffer's objectives and manual trial and error approaches in creating what this pioneer called a 'symphony of noise.' [165] However, at the end of his life, Schaeffer viewed his work as a failure, stating that 'we are still born in do-re-mi' (*The Wire,* August 2005, p.48). [166]

For Bargeld, it is John Cage (1912-92) who as a sound organiser dominates the twentieth century (NBOA, sourced 26 November 2006):

> I'm always surprised when I actually realise that it still does make sense….John Cage was one of the greatest composers of the century…It's not a question of types of music…there's hardly anything that hasn't been soaked up by the normal circuits of doing culture, so to speak free of any kind of limitation….there's hardly anything between Cage and popular music.

In stating that everything we do is music*,* Cage transformed the musical landscape; he created new sound objects by amplifying everyday items and environments and hence, rejected the idea of a high or specialist art.[167] He believed that anyone could make music and that music should change the performer and the spectator: 'instead of self-expression I am involved in self-

[165] This also extends to his experimentation with the non-phonemic aspects of the human voice in *Symphonie pour un Homme Seul* 1950 with Pierre Henry. Schaeffer had no interest in Stockhausen's sonic synthesis which he regarded as too composed and controlled.
[166] Douglas Kahn interprets this as Schaeffer concluding that no music is possible outside of do-re-mi-fa but Kahn adds that he was told by Cage that Schaeffer 'should have kept going up the scale' -*Noise, Water, Meat,* Cambridge MA, MIT Press,1999, pp.110-111.
[167] Many of Cage's acknowledged sound sources from flower pots to generators are the precursors of Neubauten's sonic objects.

alteration' (Brown, 2002, p.111).[168] Technically he strove to disrupt traditional musical continuity so that the essence of the music is in each moment rather than in the connections between the moments (Holzaepfel, 2002, p.172); [169]finally, he championed the use of randomly generated sounds and silences.[170] Such techniques were closely tied to his own idea of anarchy and self-government: 'I am speaking of nothing special, just an open ear, and an open mind and the enjoyment of daily noise' (Williams, 2002, p. 233).[171]

In focusing the art of listening, Cage valued the environmental and industrial sounds already identified and used by Russolo and Schaeffer as well as the bodily presence in a relationship with the sonic object. Again, Bargeld's comment succinctly summarises this: 'Listening to a motor, that's a Cage experience. Cage was the one who said that once you start listening to noise, you will see how fascinating it is and that it has musical qualities' (NBOA, sourced 26 November 2006).

Cage is also the practitioner most closely linked to performative silence (a constant concern of Neubauten) with his belief that 'Silence is the material of music as well as sound' (Johnston, *There is no Silence Now,* 1962).[172] He shifted silence from a negation to 'full' in redefining it as ambient sound. Cage's silence is, of course, closely bound up with *4.33.* This illustrates the

[168] Kathan Brown, *Visual Art,* pp.109-127 In Nicholls, 2002. Bargeld said …'when I walk off (the stage) I want to feel different than I did before' (Broadhurst, 1999, p.161).
[169] John Holzaepfel, *Cage and Tudor,* pp.169-185 in Nicholls, 2002.
[170] This was clearly in evidence in the recreation of Cage's New York Town Hall concert, 1958 at HCMF, November 2008.
[171] Alastair Williams, *Cage and Postmodernism,* pp.227-241 in Nicholls, 2002.
[172] Jill Johnston in John Cage*, An Anthology,* R. Kostelanetz, (ed.), New York: Da Capo Press, 1991, p.146.

basis of Cage's thinking and his rejection of the Western concept of striving to create profundities. Cage wanted art which was not an imposition on the recipient, but a way of creating a situation of many possibilities with the recipient as an active partner, a belief consistently pursued by Neubauten. [173]

The cross-fertilisation of artists in the various sound arts has been one of the most noteworthy developments of the emancipation of sound. As Bargeld said above, 'there is nothing between Cage and popular music now;' such occurrences as Zeitkratzer working with Lou Reed, Xenakis' collaboration with DJ Spooky, Philip Glass playing with Leonard Cohen and Patti Smith, Jocelyn Pook with Massive Attack or indeed Neubauten themselves with the Redux Orchestra, is commonplace. Hence, it is of interest to note that out of all the plethora of recorded sound works available at the start of the twenty-first century, the music of Neubauten most closely resembles not that of other comparable rock musicians but the works of 'classical' composer, Iannis Xenakis (1922-2001).[174]

Although the work of Neubauten and Xenakis operate through different means, examples of this shared sound quality lie in the multi-layered metallic sounds, the abrupt changes and the frequent moving sound masses which

[173] Silence becomes synonymous with Barthes' erotic glimpse between the edges and hence as Neubauten claimed – 'silence is sexy'. This album was in homage to Cage and the 1999 total eclipse of the sun. However, Neubauten have found playing silence problematic at rock venues where the gaps become trips to the bar or filled in with chatter: 'the louder you get, the quieter we become' was Bargeld's response to a Glasgow audience, 25 April 2007.

[174] Xenakis was never part of the Darmstadt avant-garde as he rejected Serialism; his work bears similarity to that of Varèse who championed him. LaBelle highlights the difference by describing Xenakis' work as 'becoming' and durational like his architecture which is full of ruptures, flows, movement whereas Serialsm is linear and stasis (2006, p.190).

are interrupted by a variety of interfering, destablizing peripheral noises.[175] For example, Xenakis' *Persephassa* (1969) employs two instruments created by the composer: the Simantra bois, a dense sonorous wooden plank played with a wooden mallet, and the Simontra metalliques, a dense steel rod played with a triangle beater. It is twenty-six and half minutes of cool, disjointed metal and wood; sound tumbles over sound in visual patterns of spatial co-habition; there are tiny peripheral noises, foregrounded drumming, breaks and stillness created by six players whose sheer physicalisation with their surround of instrumentation echoes the relationship of Neubauten with their objects.

Likewise, Xenakis' piece *Nuits* (1967) written for Greek political prisoners at a time when Xenakis' country was under a military junta, uses only twelve voices, lasts nearly nine minutes and is created from phonemes and syllables from Sumerian and ancient Persian. Any meaning lies in the grain of the voices themselves, which reach a universal cry of pain (also see Chapter 7). A final interesting link is that Xenakis was an architect; he invented what he rather mysteriously called 'Stochastic' music which involved a use of mathematical equations which shaped the sound (pitch, rhythm, timbre) much like building blocks for architecture. This gives the sound its three dimensional, visceral 'body'- a characteristic of Neubauten's work too and, although in a different medium, this has similiarities with Bargeld's 'strange systematics of form' (Broadhurst, 1999, p.161). Xenakis' words regarding his intentions for his music, also bears a similarity with those of Neubauten:

[175] See LaBelle (2006) for detail on Xenakis' musical architecture, pp.183-92.

> the listener must be gripped and –whether he likes it or not- drawn into the flight path of the sounds, without a special training being necessary. The sensual shock must be just as forceful as when one hears a clap of thunder or looks into a bottomless abyss
>
> (Barbican Centre, London, programme for '*Total Immersion'* March, 2009, p.12).

The programme for Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival of November 2008 offered a definition of noise (the set list had included, as already mentioned, a 50 year retrospective on Cage's 1958 New York Town Hall concert). This definition does not have unnecessary connonations; it includes both the intention and the listener, it balances the affective and the 'new' listening; hence it provides a useful conclusion for this section before a consideration of two other descriptors- Industrial music and Punk. (Both of these are regarded as aspects of noise-music and both are used about Neubauten's work):

> Noise as sound out of its familiar context, is confrontational, affective and transformative. It has shock value, and defamiliarises the listener who expects from music an easy fluency, a secure familiarity or any sort of mollification.

2: Industrial-Punk

San Fransisco Art Institute course schedule description of Bargeld (Fall 2008):

founder member of seminal noise/punk band

Emusic definition of Neubauten: *alternative-punk/industrial.*

Neubauten are filed variously (from London's Sister Ray to Berlin's Mr Dead and Mrs Free) under (Post)Punk, Industrial, Urban-folk, Gothic, Indie, Metal and more.[176] Although none of these terms is particularly useful (other than for the music industry to classify its commodities for promotion and sale) it is nevertheless important to briefly examine the two most commonly applied ones in relation to Neubauten, Industrial and Punk.

Defining Industrial is as problematic as defining Noise. Simon Ford (2007, p.7.24) distinguished Industrial from Punk by referring to the former as 'more John Cage than Johnny Rotten' (certainly participants of Industrial music have claimed links to Russolo, Schaeffer, Cage and Dadaism). Chris Bohn states that Industrial 'can only ever be a broad umbrella term which lost its credentials once it included the likes of Nine Inch Nails and Skinny Puppy' (email communication with author 2 June 2007). Jon Savage describes Industrial as more extreme in its interest in decay and dirt as a reaction against Punk's absorption into commercialism. His (1983, pp.4-5)[177] five descriptors are useful but only two aspects are appropriate to Neubauten –

[176] Goth music is the least satisfactory description, despite the 'Goth-clad' followers (predominantly female) who attend Neubauten concerts. Bargeld responded to a question on the group's 'Gothic' following with 'the Germans invented Goth' but he also dismissed the label as inappropriate (interview with author 10 October 2006). There is a link to Nick Cave whose darker 'folk' material has been designated as 'gothic' if not 'Goth' (University of Westminster Cave Conference: 5 July 2008).

[177] J. Savage's Introduction in V.Vale &A. Juno *Industrial Culture Handbook,* San Francisco, V/Search Publications, 1983.

these are organizational autonomy and the use of synthesizers and non-musical sounds; the others being an interest in the Information War, the employment of extra-musical elements like film or video (particularly prevalent with Cabaret Voltaire from the mid seventies) and the use of shock.[178] I argue that a more effective definition of Industrial for Neubauten would have to include Russolo-influenced musical concerns of urbanity, Futurism and minimalism yet also retain primitivity and a gritty, utilitarian Musique Concrète which could embrace dirt and decay. But the inclusion of misanthropy (a championing of de Sade or Charles Manson) and the deliberate parody of the Culture Industry, which are present in Throbbing Gristle's more abject work, disqualify Neubauten once again.

Throbbing Gristle (whose work predates that of Neubauten by five years) certainly pursued similar aims to the German musicians which included the desire to create disruptive, improvised music with unconventional instruments played by non-musicians.[179] The individual members of the two collectives knew one another and collaborated but Neubauten have never indulged in the provocation in which members of Throbbing Gristle revelled (for example, the Auschwitz logo of their 'death factory' label, the infamous ICA *Prostitution* performance, their Viennese Aktionist stage strategies and the extremity of

[178] Bohn stated that Throbbing Gristle (TG) claimed the first use of 'industrial' for their record label which was intended as a provocation in the light of Britain's failing industries and a vicious parody of the music industry. He believes that 'TG and their Industrial label were about the best embodiment and definition of Industrial during their first phase. To them Industrial largely referred to the process of making, packaging and promoting popular music […] What they were doing was serious/seriously ugly enough to make the use of that logo (Death Factory) not entirely gratuitous' (email communication with author 20 April 2007).
[179] P-Orridge's 'remarkably prescient slogan' of the seventies concerning the future of music being with non-musicians (Simon Ford, *industrial revolutionaries* in *The Wire*, October 1996, pp.35-38) certainly relates to many of the players across Punk and New Wave, including Neubauten.

some of their masochistic noise/ lyrics and deliberately confrontational artwork). Although both groups believe their work to be research, Throbbing Gristle had a political agenda, whereas Neubauten have primarily a musical agenda.[180] There are, sonically, closer connections between Neubauten and New York's No-Wave movement, in particular, DNA, with Arto Lindsay's (self-taught) disjointed non-linguistic vocals 'between blues and autism' (Glenn O'Brien, sleeve notes, *DNA ON DNA*, No More Records, 12, 2004). Bargeld cited this group as a personal influence not Throbbing Gristle (interview with author, 05 November 2005).

Overall, Neubauten seem to have little in common with the musicians described as 'industrial' in the *Re(search) Industrial Culture Handbook* (1983), most of whom appear to express more interest in the darker aspects of life than in sound experimentation. What *The Wire* (Lisa Banning & Derek Walmsley, June 2007, p.71) describes as Neubauten's 'tense beauty' perhaps explains why Neubauten themselves are not represented in the Handbook.[181]

Paul Hegarty's (2007, pp.105-116) analysis of industrial music also substantiates this darkness (absent in Neubauten's work). He cites industrial as:

[180] The concept of *Listening with Pain* by the audience was also a shared aim. TG were fascinated by military research into 'metabolic music' as a weapon. P-Orridge: 'people…think that music's just for ears, they forget it goes into every surface of the body, the pores, the cells, it affects the blood vessels' (S. Reynolds, *Rip it up and start again.* London, Faber and Faber, 2005, p.235. TG also used extreme lighting and visuals as a retinal attack (Ibid., p. 240).

[181] These artists include Throbbing Gristle, Monte Cazazza- who is also credited with the invention of the phrase 'industrial music for industrial people'- Boyd Rice, Mark Pauline, SPK, Non and Z'ev; only Z'ev seems to have something in common with Neubauten in his striving for anti-consumer technology and 'thieving' of sonic debris.

> Suspicious of musicality […] its hatred of contemporary art and society went deeper (than Punk's), its critique harsher […] unlike Punk, the answer was not change, but awareness of the fetid state of capitalist society.

Hegarty's industrial music is filled with unresolved negativity and a seeking after transgression with little overriding purpose. He argues that Industrialism did not strive to subvert society but to pervert it. Here the artistic appropriation and re-use of urban materials was not conceived with a naïve cheerfulness of a new eye (as in Neubauten's rag-picking (see Chapters 4 - Conclusion: *Berlin, Metaphor and Music*- & 6) but was more intent on turning the materials (hence society and its institutions) in on themselves (Ibid., p. 113). If this is 'industrial' then Neubauten fail to qualify – their over-riding positiveness (as expressed in Chapter 1) guarantees this.

Punk as a description for Neubauten's work seems a little more useful. There were some parallels between growing up in the 'ghettos' of the New Reality's housing schemes in 1970s Britain and in Kreuzberg with its abandoned, squatted wall areas. There was the shared fascination with the edge and cut of clothes and hair (as in Gudrun Gut's knitwear, Bargeld's razored scalp) in art performance, photography and Super-8; the spasmodic jerk of punk dancing and of collage and most evocatively in the symbol of the Berlin Wall which both ruptured the city and moved its centre to the edges, thus providing Neubauten with both a philosophy and their art. There was, of course, the DIY culture which is discussed in the next chapter. However, there were differences. First, punk was quite conservative and reductionist; it was not

essentially developmental, expansive or experimental. Rather it looked back to the roots of Rock and Roll. In its pure state, it created an exciting, visceral, confrontational style; however, its short life did not seem to generate much other than a brief reinvigoration of the rock genre, whereas Neubauten's work was/is both developmental and experimental.[182] Secondly, there is the dichotomy of whether punk's origins were 'in the reality of working class experience or the image of proletarian play' (Grossberg, 1984, p. 247) [183]Jon Savage (1991, p.82) argues that the term Punk was associated from its beginning with a particular kind of anti-establishment protest, of 'deliberate unlearning, the aesthetic which delighted in Rock's essential barbarism' and it implied 'an underclass menace'.[184] Hence, there developed (in England, at least) the Punk image of the working class, brute-child either abused by his handler or costumed in art school rags. There was also present in many Punk and Post-Punk players, an *IF* factor – an inverted Public or Grammar School education or, at least, a literate (self-taught) articulate anger which was subversively 'slumming it'. However, although some members of Neubauten claim proletariat, educationally failed origins, their early musical attitude was not part of a class/education war; nor did/do they assume a show of ignorance; rather they have always been, and remain, disarmingly erudite and very fluent about their work, its influences, intentions and social aims.

[182] Simon Armitage expressed a similar view in his celebration of Ian Curtis (*Great Lives*, Radio 4, 5 May 2008) when he stated that Punk music, for him, lacked the depth and development which he found in Joy Division.
[183]Lawrence Grossberg, *Another Boring Day in Paradise* in *Popular Music,* vol. 4, 1984, pp. 225-258, CUP. www.jstor.org accessed 13.09.09.
[184] Jon Savage, *England's Dreaming,* London: Faber and Faber Ltd.1991.

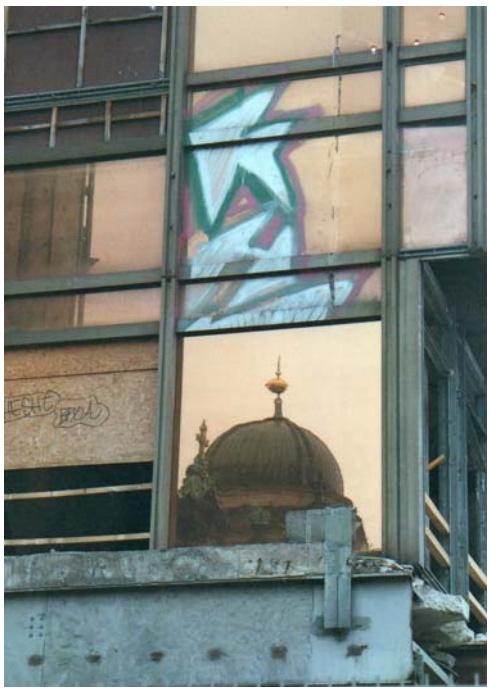
Einstürzende Neubauten could not and cannot be thus confined into any of these categories; the range of their noise across each of their eleven major albums is evidence enough even without considering their other work for radio, theatre, film or documentary. They have continued to explore sound which ranges from experiments suggesting Pierre Schaeffer's *Etudes aux Chemins de Fer* (Rudi Moser's amplified steel table, webcast, July 2006) to Musterhaus, 2006, *Stimmen Reste* (which echoes Hugo Ball/Kurt Schwitters Dadaist recitations and Steve Reich's decompositions). Their early work had its roots both in the German language *Politrock* of Ton Steine Schebern and the Dada collages and Fluxus interactions of Faust. Their use of industrial and non traditional instrumentation pays homage to Russolo, Artaud and Cage; their complex and extreme orchestrations suggest a 'popular' Xenakis while the text-orientated work builds on German cabaret, the *Liedermacher* and Müller's non-action theatre. The one throughline in this diversity is their use of Berlin as site, material and subject matter, first as *Nachgeborenen* of *West* Berlin and then as witnesses of the *Wende* and re-unification; hence the following chapter now focuses on the city of their origins.

Chapter Four: **DAS DÄMONISCHE BERLIN**

(Benjamin. Berliner Rundfunk, February 1930)

For without the history, image and situation of the walled city, Berlin, there would be no Einstürzende Neubauten

(Maeck, 1996, p.37)



Berlin layers – Palast der Republik with graffiti & the Dom.(Photograph taken by K Shryane for the author, 22.04.06)

> Berlin, impossible to live in, impossible to leave
>
> (Brecht: Gilloch,1997, p.2)[185]
>
> (West Berlin)…a magnet for the Asocial, the Chaoten, the draft dodgers and illegal immigrants as well as refugees from the leaden flatness of a West German society that had yet to properly fill the cultural vacuum left behind by the destruction of Nazism
>
> (Bohn, *The Wire,* January 1999, p.82)

[185] G.Gilloch, *Myth and Metropolis,* Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997.

Introduction

The centrality of Berlin was introduced in Chapter One as the architecture and newbuildings of the Cold War era and as Architainment and Critical Reconstruction of the reunification process. In this chapter I focus more closely on the effect of Berlin's recent history on its buildings, their ruins, removal and afterlives in relation to Neubauten's birth and development. The city is discussed as being both interim (in perpetual motion) [186] and as being comprised of layers which deny memory. These aspects occur as key st ates in Neubauten's texts and practice, as well as being represented in their name and sound.

Neubauten's work has moved from inciting (in the 1980s) the impolsion of the new buildings of occupied West Berlin, to a more reflective criticism (through the eyes of Dürer's Melancholia) of the city's layers and holes in more recent work. In discussing the reconstruction of united Berlin with reference to *Silence is Sexy* (2000), Bargeld commented:

> One of my basic criticisms about the new centre of Berlin, Potsdamer Platz […] is that it's in an area of scars. It's a highly historically-charged area where there was nothing standing all my life before. The famous Hansa Studio is there, it's the only old building in the whole

[186] This familiar motif for Berlin is well captured by German art critic Karl Scheffler's (1869-1951) comment in *Berlin: City of Destiny,* 1910: '*Berlin ist dazu verdammt: immerfort zu werden und niemals zu sein'* [Berlin is damned always to become and never to be]; J. Czaplicka, *Picture of a City at Work,* pp.3-36 in *Berlin Culture and Metropolis,* (eds) C.W.Haxthausen & H. Suhr, H. New York: University of Minnesota, 1990, p.31.

> area […]. It is an architecture that makes the old faces of history disappear. Germans are still very afraid of their past […] *(Here Bargeld relates the accidental uncovering of the Führerbunker during building works and its hasty concreting over*.) - that's exactly the problem they should deal with than just trying to make history disappear […] through the eyes of Melancholia what is already the ruins of what is being built there I can see the different layers of it, put a shaft through the earth and see Berlin One, Berlin Two- and there's a small strip which is Germania. Then there are several layers on top of it and the last layer would be the Information War […] the Now…
>
> (*Terroriser*, May 2000: NBOA, sourced 26 November 2006).[187]

Bargeld further described his city's efforts to erase its past with meaningless layers as:

> I do understand that it's meant to be meaningless; it is meant to make all this disappear ... they cover it up, as an old Hollywood star might put on an extra layer of make-up on her face to make her wrinkles disappear (Louise Gray, *Independent on Sunday*, 26 March 2000, sourced NBOA, 10 October 2006).

[187] These observations recall the advice given by Brecht in his 1947/8 *A Short Organum for the Theatre* (Brecht, *Brecht on Theatre- the Development of an Aesthetic,* J.Willett (ed/trans.) London, Eyre Methuen Ltd. 1978, p.190:36*:* 'We must leave (past periods) their distinguishing marks but keep their impermanence always before our eyes so that our own period can be seen to be impermanent too.'

Hence, the first sections of this chapter provide some background to Berlin's buildings and ruins which are relevant to Neubauten's work; they argue that two of the most frenetic and creative decades of revival for Berlin, 1920-30 and the mid-1970s to the mid-80s, (both occurred after military or political turmoil and preceded great change), have much in common as well as contributing to an understanding of Neubauten.[188] The final part focuses on the more metaphorical dimensions of Berlin's constant transformations.

1: Twentieth Century Berlin

> Halfcity of old and new widows
> Corpses in the cellar and money in the bank
> Corpses with stars-of-David In brown In armygray…
> Smoke from the chimney Dust from the carpet-bombings
> Monument in Plötzensee on butcher hooks
> The plaque disappeared from Landwehr canal
> (Heiner Müller (describing West Berlin), *Der Findling,* 1987 in Malkin, 1999, p.100).

> BERLIN, my ruined BERLIN, where else have we been ruined as in BERLIN, yet your ruins, BERLIN, embrace more future than all Düsseldorf's insurance buildings put together (Reimar Lenz in Taylor, 1997, p.309).[189]

Berlin's perpetual motion is captured in Walther Ruttmann's 1922 silent documentary film, *Berlin*, *Symphonie einer Grossstadt*. This takes the viewer on a roller-coaster ride through a fully functioning Anhalter Bahnhof, a

[188] The first period was influential for Neubauten; the second gave rise to them.
[189] R.Taylor, *Berlin and its Culture,* New Haven, Yale University Press, 1997.

Potsdamer Platz traffic jam, a maze of glittering shop windows, droves of workers, restaurants and a variety show complete with chorus line. The impression given complements many of the contemporary descriptions of a giddy, hectic metropolis of consumerism - perhaps not so very different from that of Neubauten's 'island' city of the 1980s. Prophetically, too, Walter Benjamin captured the paradoxical nature of that era with a comment which remains relevant for modern Berlin:

> Noisy, matter of fact Berlin, the city of work and the metropolis of business, nevertheless has more, rather than less, than some others, of those places and moments when it bears witness to the dead, shows itself full of the dead (Gilloch, 1996, p.77).

Anhalter Bahnhof 1941 (Postcard purchased at Kreuzberg Museum, 10.06, reproduced here with their permission)

Anhalter Bahnhof Monument (Photograph taken by author, 10.06)

During the last third of the 19th century Berlin expanded faster than any other European city. Its rapid transformation from Imperial garrison and royal residence to an industrial metropolis bent on *Weltstadt* (world status) gave it a reputation for having a 'hard-nosed practical-minded materialism and caustic scepticism toward the lyrical and metaphysical' (Haxthausen & Suhr, 1990, p. xiii). Yet its cosmopolitan brew (it has always been ethnically heterogeneous and welcoming to strangers*)* has parodoxically given the city a climate of openness and tolerance which Neubauten recalled as an encouraging force for their experimentation (see Section 4 - *Die Geniale Dilletanten*).[190] The First World War and the November revolutions brought in more foreigners; during 1920-28, some 450,000 settled in the city. Post-war policy encouraged young, qualified blue/white collars, then later unqualified foreign nationals, mainly from Turkey as demand-orientated integration. By the mid 1980s West Berlin's population of 2 million contained 250,000 foreigners, the *Gastarbeiter,*

[190] Great Elector Frederick William initiated much of this ethnic mix when he welcomed the Huguenots to Berlin in 1685 after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.

who, with those who came for the 'scene', helped to create the cosmopolitan mix and arts ghetto centred on Kreuzberg (where Neubauten developed).[191]

While the works of early twentieth century artists such as Kirchner and Grosz reflected on the diversities of their city and its inhabitants (as does Alfred Döblin's 1929 novel *Berlin-Alexanderplatz*), subsequent Nazi films portrayed the city in very negative terms, emphasising the subversion of German identity by the city's cosmopolitan ethos. Here the city was seen as a *Heimat* corrupted by both communism and capitalism and the moral decadence of the Weimar Republic; it needed to be cleansed so that it could participate in the triumph of National Socialism. By 1940, Goebbels (after ruthless purges) was able to declare that '(i)n barely 10 years we have succeeded in making of this, the reddest city in the world after Moscow, a truly German city' (Haxthausen & Suhr, 1990, p.xix).

After 1945, West Berlin had to struggle with its identity as it had little of note within its boundaries (apart from a devastated Tiergarten) while the Eastern sector titled itself (after 1949) the capital of the GDR, which gave its people both an historical, cultural and geographical coherence. East Berlin had, as already mentioned, the traditional city centre and the historic, cultural and commercial areas.[192] The East also had a head start on the exiled artists too,

[191] This area, originally designed to house the influx of urban poor at the turn of the nineteenth/twentieth centuries, became, during the Cold War, the hub of Berlin's alternative culture and receiver of the city's generous federal subsidies.

[192] This included Museum Island, Unter den Linden and Schlossplatz with all its grand buildings, opera houses, palaces, the Arsenal and Neue Wache, Humboldt University and State Library, the Deutsche/Kammerspiele, Volksbühne, Schiffbauerdamm theatres, Nikolaiviertel, the oldest part of the city with its churches, the once vibrant Jewish quarter, Babelsburg film studios and of course, Mitte, the heart of the city, and much of the administrative complex, as well as the shopping and entertainment area of Friedrichstrasse.

as those socialist/communist artists who had fled Nazism (e.g. Otto Nagel, Anna Seghers, Paul Dessau, Hanns Eisler, Frederich Wolf) soon returned to build the new utopia. Brecht, the most illustrious of these, became a magnet for younger Socialist artists and the GDR's biggest, although most troublesome, celebrity.[193]

Brecht's Memorial & Schiffbauerdamm theatre (Photographs taken by author 24.12.07)

The official Eastern view of their larger Western cousin was that it was full of drugs, decadence, prostitution, poverty, unemployment, racism, violence and sin.[194] This rested cheek by jowl with rampant consumerism, wealth, sophistication, fast cars, aristocrats, and of course, all the ex-Nazis for the East German State had conveniently taken responsibility for Third Reich memory by assuring its people that they had always been part of the anti-

[193] For his Berliner Ensemble was more than a theatre troupe; the members were living and communicating a philosophy of man and art in society, which coupled with Brecht's tendency to address the whole of his country (for he believed that unification would come peacefully) kept the East German government very wary of him and his entourage. Janik details in Chapter 7 of *Recomposing German Music* (2005) the condemnation of Brecht and Dessau's *Das Verhör des Lukullus* in 1951 for its open-ended *Lehrstück* tradition.

[194] As David Bowie called it the 'smack capital of Europe' (Radio 2's *Berlin Soundz Decadent,* 2 January 2007) there was probably reasonable cause for this opinion; likewise with the publicity given to one of the city's child prostitutes, Christiane F of ZoologischerGarten (West Berlin's main rail terminus).

Fascist Germany and by keeping their victory very much alive in its gigantic war memorials. 'Westberlin' [195] opted for the *Wirtshaftswunder* and shopping over addressing Nazi guilt and history, and although not a capital city, created its agenda as a glittering outpost of freedom, a shopping showcase of capitalism, an oasis of accelerated consumerism, landlocked and soaking up vast subsidies, grants and incentives.[196] This forced smaller East Berlin into competing, much to the detriment of other important and needy GDR cities like Leipzig and Dresden, whose previously cultivated beauties and seats of learning were neglected for those of the capital.[197]

Consequently during the period of the Wall (in contrast to the Weimar era) West Berlin's vibrant international cultural life was aided by a deliberate government programme to compete with and challenge the East. Culture became indispensable to the successful functioning of the city's life-support system: 'Nothing was asked of Berlin beyond its complicity in surviving […] the real business of Berlin was Berlin' (Haxthausen & Suhr, 1990, p.xiv). After the Wall's removal, West Berlin discovered business of a more conventional kind in the new markets of the East; on the surface at least, Müller's two time zones for East and West have now blurred into the commercial make-overs of Mitte and Alexanderplatz.

For Bargeld, contemporary Berlin has lost its uniqueness; he believes this was at its height between the years 1975-85 (BBC Radio 2, 2 January 2007).

[195] Westberlin was the East's name for the western sections of Berlin.
[196] By the end of the 1980s, the annual culture budget of West Berlin was over 550 million DM, more than half of the federal outlay for culture in the entire US (Haxthausen & Suhr, 1990, p.xiv).
[197] These two cities became the first sites of the Velvet Revolution in 1989.

There are several parallels between this period and that of 1920-30; both periods were times of excessive cultural experimentation able to attract an influx of national and international artists.[198] Ronald Taylor in *Berlin and its Culture* (New Haven, Yale University Press,1997, p. 211) described post-1918 Berlin as having 'a taste of the future about it and as a result, people were only too willing to put up with the cold and dirt of the place.' Such an observation could well have been written about the Cold War years in West Berlin for in both eras, the city, despite its fragmentation (actual and metaphoric), remained attractive to those seeking excitement, relief or escape; many came as economic migrants for Berlin has always had a reputation for a low cost of subsistence living. Both periods also emphasised urbanity: the Weimar Republic was an urban culture with no nostalgia for past glories, no romantic pining after nature; life was in the present. This surfaced again (as noted previously) with NDW's *Zurück zum Beton* and the post-punk Dilletantes.[199] For both Ernst Bloch and Siegfried Kracauer, in the 1920s, Berlin's fragmentation and rapidity were captured by its cabaret and revues; these seemed to be congruent with the nervous exhaustion of the perpetually transmutable Berlin which Bloch (Jelavich, 1990, p.108)[200] described as 'perennially new, a city built around a hollow space, in which not even the mortar becomes or remains hard.' Similarly, Siegfried Kracauer in his many writings on Weimar Berlin as review editor of the *Frankfurter Zeitung,* (David Frisby, *Deciphering the Hieroglyphics of Weimar Berlin: Siegfried Kracauer,*

[198] The second period refers to **West** Berlin.
[199] Fritz Brinckmann's description of Bargeld in the early 80s offers a snapshot of this: 'Blixa was a man of the absolute present….not even the previous minute or the next minute mattered- just the absolute now' (in Dax, 2005, p.10).
[200] Peter Jelavich, *Modernity, Civic Identity and Metropolitan Entertainment,* pp.95-110 in Haxthausen & Suhr, *Berlin: Culture and Metropolis,* 1990.

pp.152-165 in Haxthausen and Suhr, 1990) observed the city's architecture, streets, social types and entertainments as artificially constructed fragments which he felt, could all of a sudden, split apart – an observation which seems remarkably relevant to Cold War West Berlin and Neubauten's apocalyptic performances.

Both periods also sought authenticity in their art; the *Neue Sachlichkeit* of the Weimar Republic repudiated the lushness of late Romanticism much as punk and *Neue Deutsche Welle* rejected the Prog Rock indulgence and Motorik trance trips. Technology and politics too, reared their heads in both decades and were embraced with excesses of enthusiasm and disdain. The desire to make *Gebrauchsmusik* and art for everyone, an art which blurred the line between performer and audience was equally pursued.[201] Bertolt Brecht's and Paul Hindemith's intent with the *Baden Baden* festival in 1929 was captured in their declaration that it is better to make music than to listen to it – 'all present were expected to join in the music-making' (Janik, 2005, pp.46-7) - a soundbite which could well have described the *Festival Genialer Dilletanten* of 1981.[202]

[201] In his *The Author as Producer*, *Selected Works, vols 1 & 2,* M. Jennings, H. Eiland & G. Smith (eds) (trans.) R. Livingstone & others, Cambridge, Mass, Belknap Press, 1999, pp.774-777), Benjamin discusses Brecht's *Umfunktionierung* as the desire to eliminate antithesis between performers and listeners and to turn consumers into producers (see Chapter 10).
[202] Here was an event, in 1929, which broke all the rules of a concert, where a score was a suggestion not a set of instructions and no designated seating area was separated out. These qualities were found in the Geniale Dilletanten and post-Punk ethos of the 1970s and 1980s in West Berlin. The Cold War sidelined any rediscovery (in the West) of Brecht's revolutionary musical theatre work, in particular, the *Lehrstücke.* Bargeld said (interview with author 5 November 2004) that in his opinion, Brecht's *Lehrstücke* were among his best and most revolutionary works. They were also the Brecht works which Müller used.

A preference for 'anti-art', the irrational and eclectic, was also present in the two time periods as both the Dadaists and the Dilletantes were more involved with a style of life than a system of art; a similar cross-over diversity can be found in the respective street performances, music, art, film and installation works. The first period ended (1933) in tyranny with the failure of the Left to even agree on a common approach in music; [203] the second period ended (1989) in the triumph of business, banks and tourism (although 'Berlin for Sale' is obviously preferable to Berlin as Germania).[204]

Part of Speer's Great Arch, 1941. This 'ignored' remnant sits on the corner of Loewenhardtdamm & General-Pape-Strasse (Photograph taken by author, 02.07)

[203] The tensions between the two workers' singers' leagues, the *DAS (Deutsche Arbeiter sänger)* and the *KaD (Kamppfgemeinschaft der Arbeitersänger)* are well documented by Elizabeth Janik in *Recomposing German Music,* 2005.

[204] The massive scale of the proposed Germania is captured in a unique surviving section of Speer's arch (see photograph above) which marked the southern point of the North-South axis on which Speer's city was to be reconstructed. The Berlin Republic astutely chose to build on an East-West axis.

The city of Berlin continues to attract contemporary artists and performers to settle and work. This was reaffirmed by Radio 3's *Mixing It* (2 February 2007); here Mark Russell and Robert Sandall described the city as a magnet for creative people who work on the outer limits of their artforms.[205] They interviewed a variety of musicians who live and work in the 'affordable tenement studios' of Kreuzberg or Prenzlauer Berg. All talked enthusiastically about the city as a village which was still cheap and calm - a blank canvas with a central Eastern European perspective. Facts such as being able to live without day-jobs, the diversity of the musical activity and the sharing of personnel and equipment were also emphasised. The programme argued that for over four decades Berlin had held an extraordinary position for the musicians who lived and worked there. Berlin also continues to exert a fascination for a range of artists from other media who attempt to address the traces of the united city; for example, Tacita Dean's and Amie Siegel's photographs and films, Sophie Calle's and Robin Rhode's installations, Mark Wallinger's enactments, David Hare's *Berlin/Wall* talks (March 2009 at the Royal Court and National theatres) and Mark Ravenhill's drama, *Over There* (2009).

2: Berlin's Buildings

To whom should the city belong? To those who are good for it

(after Brecht and Nicholas Whybrow, 2005, p.147)

[205] BBCTV 4's *Tales from Berlin* (20 June 2006, K.Wark & T. Aimes) was also based on the premise of Berlin's attractiveness for artists.

a. Rückbau

Matt Frei began his programme (BBCTV 2, 21 November 2009) on Berlin's problematic relationship with its architecture by describing the apocalyptic landscape which greeted the surviving Berliners at *Stunde Null;* he talked about 'the morality of Berlin's architecture' and that 'every act of demolition is as politically and emotionally charged as each act of construction'. Berlin's buildings are discourses in the manner suggested by Roland Barthes's lecture (16 May 1967) *Semiology and the Urban*.[206] History has endowed them with meanings only to negate these for new ones. From 1949 the city was an ideological battlefield of opposing designs and purposes so by 1989, the reunited city had to rationalise the existence of two vastly differing styles and a range of duplicate buildings. A brief glimpse at just four Berlin structures (Siegessäule, representing the Imperial period of military might, the former Nazi Aviation Building from which the bombing of Europe was planned, the Europa Building, a Western propaganda symbol, and the Fernsehturm, an Eastern propaganda symbol) reflect these ideological fluctuations.

The Europa Building and Fernsehturm (Photographs taken by author 02.07)

[206] In Neil Leach (ed.), *Rethinking Architecture,* London, Routledge, 1997, p.166-172.

The first building (*Siegessäule*) is for some (especially those who advocate rebuilding the Stadtschloss) an icon of nostalgia for the Hohenzollerns, and for others, an embarrassing symbol of former Prussian aggression: the Nazi Aviation Building, once a demonstration of Hitler's power and the fact that he would have only neubauten (Ladd, 1998, p.135)[207] became a symbol of terror. De-Nazified after 1945, it became the GDR's House of Ministries, then, in 1990, de-Communised, it became the headquarters of the *Treuhandanstalt,* the Western government agency charged with liquidating East Germany's state-owned economy. Here it became, once more, a hated building as thousands of East Germans lost their jobs (Ladd, 1997, p.147).[208] Now the building, with careful concealing facades, houses the city's Department of Finance.

Former Nazi Aviation Ministry **www.answers.com/topic/reich-air-ministry**

The latter two buildings (the Europa Building and the Fernsehturm) were clear symbols of the Cold War, both asserting that the 'other side' was still there.

[207] B. Ladd, *Ghosts of Berlin,* Chicago: University Press, 1997.
[208] *Treu* meaning *loyal* and *Hand* as *hand* provided fertile ground for Eastern satire as the hand was seen as crooked and grasping (Derek Lewis, in D. Lewis, & R.P. Mckenzie, (eds) *The New Germany,* Exeter: University Press, 1995, p.309. Also see John Rodden: *Politics & the German Language*, *Debatte*, vol.12.1, 2004, pp.46-63.

The twenty-two storey glass box, the Europa Centre, with a rotating neon-flashing Mercedes-Benz logo on its roof, was built in 1965 in the commercial Kurfürstendamm area of West Berlin to intimidate the East with business and capital; it now blends quietly into the skyline by ZoologischerGarten (no longer West Berlin's central rail station). The East German authorities began the construction of the Fernsehturm in 1964 and completed it in 1969. The Television Tower rises nearly 1,200 feet making it the most dominant feature of the Berlin skyline. Located in the socialist redesigned Alexanderplatz, its height and design played on an image of the space race. Now it is a tourist attraction and its well-patronised revolving aerial restaurant turns, under capitalism, twice as fast (recalling Müller's East-West time loop) as it did under communism; hence, processing twice as many patrons.[209]

Since 1989, the West has been far more destructive with GDR buildings than with those of the Third Reich in 1945 although the apartments on KarlMarx Allee were recognised as important urban architecture; privatized in 1993, they soon became desirable properties for incoming Westerners with the economic means.[210]

[209] The convention is that unless one has booked a table for a particular event, the *kaffee und kuchen* should be consumed within one revolution (an hour under communism, half an hour under capitalism) as there is always a queue waiting for a vacant table.

[210] In his essay, *The German Language*, Derek Lewis (1995, pp.297- 320), notes the West's ambiguous image of '*der wilde Osten'*- which pinpointed the post-*Wende* economic depression and rise in criminality in the East but also the 'wild west' swashbuckling entrepreneur image of a land up for grabs for Westerners. In BBC Radio 4's *The Westernising of East Berlin* (17 November 2009) an interviewee stated 'The West went to the East and not to congratulate'. Mark Ravenhill's play, *Over There* (2009) explores the continuing Ossi/Wessi divide and the '*Mauer im Kopf*'.

The apartments on KarlMarx Allee (Photograph taken for author by Dr Maria Zinfert, 2008)

Debate and discontent continued over Berlin's demolition, renovation and construction throughout the 1990s and continues into the twenty-first century. Wise (1998, p. 111)[211] cites the response of the President of Berlin Chamber of Architects to the proposed 'make-over' of Marx-Engels Platz: 'We find it unacceptable that buildings that have become a part of urban history are being erased from memory precisely because they are historically burdened […] history and identities are thereby being eradicated.' Ladd too (*Ghosts of Berlin,* 1998, p.233) challenges the terminology of *critical* reconstruction as he points out that the rebuilding is based on a selective engagement with the past. It is a victor's policy being imposed on Berlin which has consistently devalued and deleted East German markers of architecture and life. Hence, the bizarre term, *'Rückbau'* came into being for the destruction of both the Foreign Ministry and the Palast der Republik. Andrea Schmid explained (email communication with author 20 April 2006) that this was considered more palatable than *Abriss* as it suggested a 'removal' to elsewhere.[212]

[211] M.Wise, Wise, *Capital Dilemma,* New York: Princetown Architectural Press, 1998.
[212] *'Rückbau'* which is variously translated- renaturation, decommissioning, unbuilding, reverse building, removal- has included the renaming of streets and squares if these had been in recognition of communist resistance fighters against the Third Reich which has been

Palast der Republik – 'The Removal' (Photographs taken by K. Shryane for the author, 04.06)

interpreted as giving these 'martyrs' traitor status. Daniel Liebskind has also pointed out (N. Whybrow, *Street Scenes: Benjamin, Brecht and Berlin,* Bristol: Intellect Books, 2005, pp.161-163) that 'the identity of Berlin cannot be refounded on the ruins of history or in the illusionary reconstructions of an arbitrarily selected past.' Walter Womacka, unable to persuade the demolishers of the GDR Foreign Ministry to let him keep the murals he had created for the interiors, painted the destruction of them. At the time of writing the Palast der Republik has been demolished, the fate of the Palace of Tears is uncertain but the Fernsehturm, appropriated by Telecom, is safe.

b. Verschwinden und Einstürzen

[Vanishing and Collapsing]

> Ruins architecturally, socially, bodily […] echo in the rubble of their home city…
>
> (Bohn**,** *The Wire,* April 2000, p.38)

While the buildings (both old and new) of Berlin continue to be discussed and reinterpreted for their history and associations, often the empty spaces, the voids and the missing buildings come in for even more scrutiny for, as Bargeld noted (BBC Radio 2, *Berlin Soundz Decadent,* 2 January 2007) Potsdamer Platz during the Cold War was more vividly present because of its absence. Since the performers being studied here chose, in 1980, to call themselves 'Collapsing Newbuildings', these discourses cannot be ignored. Furthermore, Jürgen Teipel (email communication with author 19/20 October 2005) stressed that it is necessary to be aware of the ruined and voided state of sections of post-war Berlin in order to understand Neubauten, the importance of their architectural leitmotif and the concept of clearing space and creating holes which dominate much of their music.

For her work *Die Entfernung,* 1996 ['The Detachment'- literally, a gap or space between two points] Sophie Calle visited the locations of former GDR monument sites which have been erased by the West since 1989. She photographed the gap, asked passers-by and residents to describe their memory of the missing object then she placed this description at the site to stand in the stead of the missing.[213]

[213] Amie Siegel's *Berlin Remade* (Hayward Gallery, February 2009) uses a similar approach juxtaposing GDR film extracts of Berlin with her own shot-by-shot remakes of the city today.

The GDR's symbol before its removal (Sophie Calle, *Die Entfernung*) & the West's replacement symbol (Photograph taken by the author 04.06)

This work correlates two of the concerns present here: the disappearance/mutation of certain Berlin buildings and peoples' diverse experiences and memories of these 'missing' structures.Of course, there is a stark difference at play here which must be acknowledged; the voids of former GDR sites have been created by the Western winners' rewrite of history and *commercial* take-over, whereas the voids related to the Nazi years were the result of war, terror and genocide; these resonate with human suffering and *human* disappearance. In the area around Grosse Hamburgerstrasse (formerly part of East Berlin and one of the main Jewish streets before the Third Reich) voids and black holes abound which have been remembered through artistic intervention. One such space of disappearance is *Der Verlassene Raum* 1996 (Biedermann and Butzmann) which depicts in the 'abandoned room' a bronze table and two chairs, one toppled.

Der Verlassene Raum 1996, Lammert's Gedenkstätte, Grosse Hamburger Strasse, 1957 and Christian Boltanski's *Missing House,* 1993 (Photographs taken by author between 2001 and 2006)

Another void is Christian Boltanski's *Missing House,* numbers 15-16 (1993) bombed during World War Two, and stitched like a wound and plastered with plaques by the artist recalling the former inhabitants and their professions. A missing Jewish cemetery and old peoples' home is haunted by a sculptured group of blackened, anxious figures, waiting (Will Lammert's *Jewish victims of Fascism,* 1957 - not one of the East's Second World War monuments to be removed).[214]

[214] Nicholas Whybrow (2005, p.145) links these voids with the missing sound of Weigel's scream, as Mother Courage.He finds more off-beat after-life voids in the graffiti-art of the predominantly Western city's taggers (the overnight graffiti bombers) whose artwork spoils the tourist's gaze on the new city especially from the scored S-Bahn windows. Whybrow reads these acts as the screams of the dispossessed; these could be Neubauten's *Dead Friends*.

Niederkirchnerstrasse is home to some of Berlin's most difficult ghosts for it was formerly Prinz Albert Strasse until it was renamed by the GDR after a Communist resistance heroine executed by the Nazis. Here were the Third Reich's main ministries plus the Gestapo headquarters, prisons and torture chambers. This void has been allowed to stand with the minimum of artistic 'intervention' as the *Topography of Terror*.[215] The partially excavated ground lies untouched, apart from created pathways and billboards of information with images of the perpetrators and their victims. There is no reconstruction, no beautification, no souvenirs, only the intervening forty years of neglect. Exposed broken walls, rubble, half-exposed cellars, buried prison cells and weeds lie, like a bleeding wound in the centre of Berlin, as a missing memorial to the tortured and executed. And as if to add a further layer of memory, a portion of the Wall has been left in tact alongside the site.[216] The name 'topography' is intended to imply that 'the land speaks' in order to confront the escapist myth that the 'evil Gestapo or SS' were conveniently people from Mars who attacked a peaceful Germany, and to recognise the reality of Nazi terror's geographical legacies in Berlin's centre and its corruption of both government and society (Ladd,1998, p.163).

[215] The site (from 1987) was originally intended to be provisional but the fact that it drew so many visitors secured its permanence despite its (now re-centralised) location having commercial potential.
[216] This has led to misinterpretation- assigning to the GDR the crimes of Hitler.

Topography of Terror (Photograph taken by author, 11.06)

Anhalter Bahnhof is another example of a ghostly Berlin void which (like Potsdamer Platz) witnessed the city's twentieth century chaotic events within its structural changes. During the first decades of the twentieth century it was the largest central terminus for Berlin's railways; bombed by the Allies, it stood ruined. In 1961, with the construction of the Wall, it had no where to go so it was mostly demolished. As with Potsdamer Platz, the Wall moved it from centre-stage to the wings and it became the station that stopped (anhalt/stop) as Peter Falk aptly put it (Wenders, 1987). Today its restored north entrance stands as a gateway (and anhalt) to a void. It was (as Teipel, Bohn and Maeck have emphasized in various communications) such West Berlin ruins and voids which provided Neubauten with their early venues and materials and their fascination with disease, decay and the apocalypse as mentioned in Chapter 1 (and to be developed in Chapter 6).

Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum (2001, Kreuzberg) has been *newly* created from a series of voids, cuts and anhalts as has the sunken installation

(by Micha Ullman, 1995) of empty library shelves under Bebelplatz, marked with Heinrich Heine's prophetic 'what starts off as the burning of books ends with the burning of people.' [217] If all these gaps are not wounds enough then buildings have been wrapped as interim (Christo and Jeanne-Claude's Reichstag) or draped to conjure up a missing ghost (Stadtschloss, Catherine Feff)[218] and prominent architects, in offering designs for Berlin's memorials of her recent past, have suggested creating void*s* (see Chapter 1:2b).

The 'cut' Jewish Museum & 'draped' Volksbühne (see footnote below)
(Photographs taken by the author, 11.04 &10.06)

Of course one of the most significant pieces of Berlin (anti-)architecture which was quickly voided was the Wall. It is now marked by an imbedded copper line (apart from the few deliberately left remnants) which streaks through the city across pavement, road, platz and cycle path. Did it help to prevent nuclear war or was Berlin a mere surrogate, a symbolic frontline? In all probability, the Allies were relieved at its construction and hence offered no resistance, for not only did it suggest that the Soviet Union had, for the time being, given up any

[217] *Almansor,* 1821.
[218] In retaliation to Feff's work, the Volksbühne covered itself with a drape of the Palast der Republik in 2006.

further claim to West Berlin but it helped to strengthen the Western message of the inherent weakness of communism. Traditionally city walls have an inside and an outside – but during its 28 years, who was in and who was out? In the twentieth century walls are riddled with roads, canals, rail lines, air routes, lines of employment and commerce; Berlin's wall cut through the modern circulation of gas, electricity and water, while in the sky over the city, other products of modernity passed across, including noise, pollution and broadcasting signals.[219]

Both halves believed that the other side were the enemies of the past; both saw the other as halting the progressive development of the new order. Both sides erected their memorials for those killed at its border. On the Western side, especially in Kreuzberg, graffiti appropriated the Wall as 'art', making it either a 'showcase for Western freedom or embarrassing evidence of Western decadence' (Ladd, 1998, p.27). Both sides indulged in denial and wishful thinking; on the East, their section was simply Berlin, capital of the GDR, and the other bit was Westberlin, an area in white with no streets. West Berlin maps also minimalised the Wall and likewise depicted their 'other half' in white. This provided easy, convenient categories of good and bad and 'otherness.' However, for the West the Wall proved very useful; not only did it make the West Germans victims and on the Allies' side against a new enemy, it reunited former Nazis with non-Nazis and brought some credence to the Eastern Bloc's belief that for some combatants, the Second War World had

[219] The bandwidth 30MHz-80MHz was used by the Voice of America, Radio Free Europe, UK, GDR and USSR for propaganda, interference and bugging during the Cold War, hence, the use of its wave frequency in *Headcleaner,* a song about propaganda. Ladd points out (1998, p.19) that with East Germans' high education levels and relative prosperity, the wall offended most in its immobilisation of its citizens.

been about the suppression of communism more than the defeat of fascism.[220] The Wall gave the West moral superiority and the feeling that it was unnatural; Germany should be united; furthermore, the creation of the 'island' city helped to facilitate the artistic experimentions of Kreuzberg-Schöneberg through its intensity of personnel, grants and audiences providing what Bargeld calls a 'window of opportunity' (interview with author 7 November 2005).

3: Kreuzberg - abgewrackte Hure

[*Scrapheap whore*] (Suhr in Haxthausen & Suhr, 1990, p.238)

..built on blood....it was full of holes and brittle...

(Berte Bartel in Dax, 2005, p.16)

An elitist village community with no hinterland

(Alexander Hacke, Ibid.)

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The effect of the Wall on Kreuzberg and Schöneberg (the specific areas that spawned Neubauten) is well documented in the excellent, free Kreuzberg Museum in Adalbertstrasse. This charts the history of the area through photographs, films, sound archives, maps and news reports of this still colourful area, and, in particular, of the *HausbesetzerKollectivs*. Much of this area, named SO36 after its pre-war postal code[221] was characterised by bomb damage, abandoned buildings and poor housing. It was thus threatened

[220] Heiner Müller expressed this as 'Hitler was the German shepherd dog who had been given a long leash so that he could snap at the communists, but when he went wild he had to be put down' (Weber, 2001, p.149).
[221] This district area also gave its name to one of its most famous clubs owned by artist, Martin Kippenburger.

with demolition plans in order to build new expensive houses and a motorway by-pass. In the second half of the 1970s this policy provoked a growing protest in the district as the number of people seeking reasonably-priced flats outnumbered the availability. By 1980, the situation had escalated into a squatter movement. The squatters' argument was that they were improving these abandoned sites (*Instandbesetzung* ['repair-squatting']), making them habitable again and thus helping to stem the rapid rent rises and costs associated with the new buildings which would have priced poorer citizens out of the area. Finally, the Berlin government was forced to halt their large-scale destruction plans and to implement a programme of urban renewal orientated toward self-help, cooperative self-administration and the reconstruction of the existing buildings at affordable costs.

The squatted properties helped to create a close-knit community for all those seeking an 'alternative lifestyle' and those fleeing the draft because West Berlin was deemed a separate state under Allied control and therefore not answerable to the Federal government's national service. To totally evade military service one had to remain until the age of 30 but this was not a major problem as it was easily possible to afford the life of a bohemian, existentialist or artist as long as you could tolerate the coal-fire smog and did not expect a shower or heating. (Bargeld has described warming bottles of water on the roof of his squat in the sunshine in order to have a shower- interview with author 10 October 2006.)

Kreuzberg Museum, Berlin (Photograph taken by author, 10.06)

The unglamorous living conditions were somewhat compensated for by the attraction of the excessive night life for 'West Berlin knows no closing time' (Wolkenstein, 2005, p.2) and the diverse club and bar scene, in particular, Risiko, Mitropa, SO36, Zest, Milchbar and Swing. Gudrun Gut (*The Wire*, April 2008, p.35)[222] expressed this as 'Berlin has this thing of doing whatever you like.' Gut (in Dax, 2005, p.15-16) recalled that the area:

> …was full of students, pensioners and people who were dodging military service. There was no industry whatsoever, it was a fake city…a bit of an artists' paradise [...] the rents were cheap, there were a lot of dropouts, everything was a bit '68ers. But we wanted to distance ourselves from the real '68ers.

[222] Philip Sherburne, *The life aquatic* in *The Wire,* April 2008, pp. 35-39.

It was the constant drip feed of subsidies handed out to West Berlin to keep it functioning that made it possible to live very cheaply and for aspiring artists to exist without regular employment. (Those employed received a ten percent supplement to their salaries 'to make West Berlin artificially attractive' (Unruh in Dax, 2005, p.16)). Small enterprises and businesses were encouraged, such as Gut's (and Bargeld's) second hand shop, *Eisengrau* in Schöneberg which doubled up as a meeting place, recording site, living quarters, an outlet for Gut's self-created knitwear and jewellery fashions and Neubauten and friends' self-produced cassettes on the *'Eisengrau'* label (which could be played at Risiko where Bargeld worked as a barman).[223] The key word, according to Gut, was 'authenticity' (interview with author 9 November 2005) which implied a raw amateurism, a scorn for tradition and perfection and a delight in shocking and annoying. This counter-culture became associated with both the night and transience; it operated in a network of small clubs run by friends for friends. Bands abounded, often sharing members and what equipment there was; derelict factory spaces, tents, underneath bridges, waste ground, abandoned rail stations and shopping precincts became performance sites. In the early 1980s there were about two to three dozen constantly-changing constellations with Gudrun Gut as a vital link across these, especially through *Eisengrau.*

This desire for raw authenticity in the face of West Berlin's falsified, life-support existence entered Neubauten's work through Bargeld's discovery of a recording of nomadic Ethiopian performers (found in the 'obscurity

[223] This was an important aspect of Bargeld's 'window of opportunity'- section 2b*. Verschwinden und Einstürzen.*

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department' of his local record store before 'World Music' existed -interview with author 28 October 2006) who worked simply with voice, handclaps, sticks and their environment. Bargeld explained in *The Independent on Sunday* (Louise Gray, 26 March 2000, sourced NBOA, 10 October 2006): 'If it was possible for nomads to come to that tear-driving authenticity by just using what's there, it should be possible for me in my own surroundings.' This encouraged him to experiment with voice and found objects - and in particular, to use with Unruh, the autobahn bridge cavity of his childhood as a recording site. The authenticity pursued here was not, both Bargeld and Gudrun Gut stressed, a Romantic one of folk and nature but more one focused on the artless art aspects of the Punk movement as expressed by Craig O'Hara in *The Philosophy of Punk* (1999, p.30).[224] O'Hara's argument (although his work centres mainly on American East and West Coast Punks) is in support of Punk's potential for Cageian self-change and responsibility which could lead to social revolution:

> We don't need to rely on rich business men to organise our fun for their profit- we can do it ourselves for no profit- we organise gigs, organise and attend demos, put out records, publish books and fanzines, set up mail order, run record stores, distribute literature, encourage boycotts and participate in political activities (O'Hara, 1999, p.153).

Such self-reliance (as detailed by O'Hara) was a crucial part of the Kreuzberg scene (and one of *Eisengrau's* key functions). A similar situation existed in

[224] C. O'Hara, *The Philosophy of Punk,* San Francisco: AK Press, 1999.

New York's East Village during the 1970s-80s; this spawned the brief but influential No-Wave which included 'geniale dilletanten' groups working across music, film, video, performance art and contemporary art. The equally brief period of West Berlin's artistic communalism (Bargeld cites 1985 as the beginning of its demise) remains a constant utopian goal throughout Neubauten's existence and is evident in their various strategies for independence, the Supporter Initiative, and the *Grundstück* and *Alles Wieder Offen* projects (see Chaper 10).[225]

Central to this DIY ethic for the Kreuzberg musicians was the cassette recorder (as already mentioned with *Eisengrau)*. With all its imperfections, it became the medium for self-made recordings and the means by which music became part of the surroundings. It was cheap, easy to operate and to circulate among a small group of artists. The simplicity of the cassette recorder also allowed a deconstruction of highly processed studio recording techniques. *Musterhaus* 5 (Potomak, September 2006), *Kassette,* bears witness to some archived fragments from this period. Bargeld explains on the accompanying sleeve notes:

> The battery operated tape recorder was an indispensable gadget to the early Neubauten. Everyone had one; most of us had one with us all the time and everywhere. We recorded: discussions, music improvisation, TV, day to day noises, we yelled, looped, we kissed its microphone and threw it on long suspenders across the wall…

[225] O'Hara's American brand of socially aware punk (which, in part, derived from the Beat Movement) has more in common with the *Geniale Dilletanten* and *Eisengrau*'s activities than that brand of punk associated with McLaren and Westwood's London (see Chapter 3 *)*.

Gudrun Gut (Photograph taken by author, 11.05)

The rapid dating of Super 8 technology meant that cameras and equipment could also be acquired quite cheaply, so this too became an essential artform of 1980s Kreuzberg. It had the potential with its grainy quality (especially at night), its lack of sophistication in editing or synchronisation, its jump cuts, scratching and treating, to appear spontaneous, innovative and immediate, with the imperfection and spirit sought for in the music scene. As with Neubauten's use of their immediate environment in their art, Super 8 could and did document the unique existence of the times; for example, night graffiti raids on the wall. The silence of Super 8 also encouraged live soundtracks and self-composed pieces so the two art forms were overlaid. (Similar partnerships occurred in other locations, for example, in London between Derek Jarman and Throbbing Gristle/Psychic TV.)

4: Geniale Dilletanten

> Berlin isn't just arty decadence either- it's rebellion, it's saying 'no'. 'No' to the guilt installed after years of sweeping the remnants of that period of history well under the carpet, the photographs locked away in family closets and the facts unmentioned in school history books with the result that it all smacks of the forbidden and fascinating. Right! Lets show them how men and women can/do make music together
>
> (Lesley Wood of Au Pairs, *Live in Berlin,* a.k.a 6, London, 1983).

The *Geniale Dilletanten* (which has been frequently referenced in this study) began as a festival, briefly became a collective noun for the amateur geniuses of West Berlin's arts scene and then the title of a manifesto.[226] Wolfgang Müller, the founder of Die Tödlich Doris and co-organiser with Bargeld, of the *Festival Genialer Dilletanten* (4 September 1981) and the subsequent manifesto, has explained in the written material accompanying *Berlin Super 80* (Monitorpop, DVD/book, 2005) that:

> The festival was an attempt to pinpoint and ignore this absurd division between high and subculture. This combination of words is already a contradiction in itself: 'ingenious' denoting high mastery is pretty much the opposite of 'dilettante' which implies a lack of skill.

[226] The *Geniale Dilletanten* (with its misspelling reportedly from Bargeld's flyer error) lives on in minor controversy (Vinyl-on-Demand, 2005). This is because both Bargeld and Müller claim to have invented the name; Bargeld claims that it was a self-made pin on sale in *Eisengrau* which Wolfgang Müller bought, whereas Müller says that he adapted it from the artist Kurt Schwitters. However the only reference to the expression found in this context is with the Köln Dada group of Max Ernst and Johannes Baargeld, from whom Bargeld took his name. 'Blixa' came from a make of cheap biro and was intentionally androgynous; Bargeld also 'named' Gudrun Gut, deliberately employing 'good' in the dark times of Punk's supposed negativity. There was a penchant for inventing new names and hence, as Gut explained, 'reinventing yourself, you were master of your own future, present and past' (Dax, 2005, p.8). Bargeld also means cash.

Berlin Tempodrom (Photograph taken by author, 10.06)

The original Berlin Tempodrom 04.09.81, image taken from author's sleeve notes of *Geniale Dilletanten,* Vinyl on Demand 2005 (photograph by Gruchot)

Bargeld (with the Tempodrom manager) invited artists and musician friends to perform at the venue which was a tent near the Wall, and now is a permanent performance site. The event aquired the title *Die Grosse Untergangsshow* [the great downfall show] and its slogan read – '*kann mann etwas machen was nicht Musik ist'* [*'*can you make something which is not music'] (Dax, 2005, album notes*).*[227] Gut (interview with author 9 November 2005)

[227] Although Bargeld has since recalled (interview with author 24 April 2006) that the standard of performances was 'poor', it was the self-production, energy and commitment which mattered. His three pieces with Gut (*Marokkoblut, Blutarmut* and *Blutjung*) still provide exciting viewing as he moans, intones and screams around the emotive word 'Blut' against her tribal drumming. Also Die Tödliche Doris' anarchic *Schuldstruktur* [*'*Guilt Structure'] and

explained that Bargeld organised and oversaw the set list and promoted the event with considerable skill; she commented on his single-mindedness and ability to attract audiences - characteristics which she believed he still employed effectively. According to Müller, the publishers, Merve Verlag, then asked him if he would write a book about the Geniale Dilletanten. It was published in 1982, with Müller as its editor and Bargeld as its major contributor. Alfred Hilsberg (sleeve notes, *Festival Genialer Dilletanten,* 2005) comments: 'with Geniale Dilletanten, Einstürzende Neubauten co-founded a scene which they themselves were the leaders in representing.' The audio-visual evidence available of this festival and other similar events of the time demonstrates the incredible variety of the music and art which was driven by the fact that nobody wanted to be like the rest (Teipel, email communication with author 20 October 2005). There was also considerable cross fertilisation between performers and fluidity between them and the watchers, which emulated much of Brecht's direction with the previously mentioned *Baden Baden* (Section 1- *Twentieth Century Berlin*) and Attali's *Composition* (see Chapter 10). Müller (Monitorpop, 2005) explained that within the confines of West Berlin 'you always got a chance to present your results to the public' which also helped to encourage experimentation.[228]

Der Tod ist ein Skandal ['Death is a scandal'] embodied the spirit of the festival's attack on what Bohn calls the 'sterile creativity of the professional culture' (*The Wire*, July 2006, p.25).

[228] See *Verschwende Deine Jugend* (2002), DVD/CD *Berlin Super 80* (2004), DVD/CD of the *Genialer Dilletanten Festival* (2005) and *So das war SO36* (1984, VHS).

Conclusion: Berlin, Metaphor and Music

Alles ist wert, dass es zugrunde geht**…**

(Walter Benjamin in Wohlfarth, (eds) Benjamin & Osborne,1994, p.160)

This final aspect of Berlin considered here returns once again to Walter Benjamin. Berlin-based sound artist, Christina Kubisch, creates what she calls 'electrical walks' which enable the stroller to encounter the city afresh with an enhanced sensual perspective (via magnetic headphones and a map of the environs for electromagnetic fields). Hence topography is playfully recycled and monuments, ruins and building sites are reinvestigated (*Five Electrical Walks,* Important Records, 2007). Benjamin's literary approach to his city (*A Berlin Childhood around 1900*)[229] also made use of the idea of looking at the city through new perspectives. This initially was through the eyes of an inquisitive child who naively misunderstands and misreads hence, creating a critical gaze of 'first sight'. In a different context, although still with a child's inventive gaze, Benjamin's 'Rag-Pickers 'relooked' at the city's rubbish to recycle 'the ruins of modernity' (Gilloch, 1997, p.165). As marginals, rag-pickers lived on the edge of consumerism; outlawed from the arcades of commerce, they assembled urban detritus, collected what others no longer desired and refunctioned this. Benjamin called these characters 'urban archaeologists' (Ibid.) who unearthed the old-fashioned commodities that in turn revealed the truth about new ones, namely that they were the same old rubbish.

[229] W. Benjamin, *A Berlin Childhood around 1900,* (trans.) H. Eiland, London, Belknap Press of Harvard, University Press, 2006.

Neubauten, in seeing their city (its architecture and debris) as a merzbau for music, looked with 'first sight' at what they found - the ruins of Anhalter Bahnhof, the disused water tower, the autobahn bridge cavity, the taxi cab partitions, abandoned shopping trolleys and air duct pipes. As rag-pickers Neubauten were the marginals of the *Wirtshaftswunder*; they lived, as Bargeld described, on 'next to no economy' (interview with author 5 November 2004) scavenging junk for noise renewal to use in 'abject' sites. Both objet trouvè and the site would be released from their origins and given a sonic afterlife, from which, Benjamin would have argued, their true natures emerged.

Benjamin's writings are composed like labyrinths of montaged memory where the past is not left behind but is continually encountered from different directions, its work being unfinished.[230] Neubauten's labyrinth, in the 1980s, was a unique one- 'a peculiar, idiosyncratic existentialist habitat' (Wolkenstein, 2005, p.2), a twentieth century walled-in city at a time when cities' requirement for protective identifying walls was archaic. This enclosure intensified, internalised and reinterpreted the journeying much as Kubisch's headphones do for the stroller.

Neubauten's sonic and textual landscapes uncannily reflect Benjamin's denial of the past as an unproblematically given that simply is no more and which culminates in the present.[231] Their music suggests this non-linearity through

[230] This idea finds actuality in the ongoing debates about the future of sensitive sites (Imperial, Nazi and GDR) and in the renewed skirmishes for the souls of the young between the neo-Nazi 'rock bands' schulhof-CDs and their Leftish/democratic counterparts. See Fabian Holt, *Kreuzberg Activists* in *Popular Music and Society,* vol.30, No. 4, October 2007, pp.469-92.
[231] For Benjamin the past is formless, it is reclaimed as needed by the *Jetztzeit*; history does not precede us but comes into being through us (Malkin, 1999, p.84).

sounds which fluctuate from the edges of the frame with picture layered on picture, yet never settling for a resolution. The early work celebrated the decay, the 'grey reality' (Bartel in Dax, 2005, p.17); its use of action-inciting verbs created a sense of speed, fragmentation and urgency. (These qualities of dislocation and discontinuity were similar to Bloch's and Kraucer's critiques of Weimar cabaret and revue as mentioned in Section 1) Later work has developed through *Silence is Sexy*'s voids and its *'alles nur kunftige Ruinen'* ['all future ruins'] to the accelerated rhythms of transport, airport rituals, and cyclical journeys of escalator and elevator found in *Perpetuum Mobile,* and the fretful eternal return and waiting of *Alles Wieder Offen.* There are those left behind in this frenetic flurry - Benjamin's 'nameless' (or Whybrow's 'bombers'), Neubauten's *Dead Friends* - who are the unrecorded and unremembered, whose traces are hidden from the dreamworld of Berlin *for sale* depicted in *Youme Meyou* (2004). This song offers a Benjaminian critique of the city, as the site of the new, holy places of pilgrimages - the arcades, boutiques, department stores - are 'cleansed' of decay, death and dirt but open for the adoration of consumerism from 'Starbucks to Guggenheims*'* [232] Other Neubauten works give Benjamin's angel, in the guise of Melancholia, the gift of flight if not of action (*Die Befindlichkeit des Landes,* 2000*)* and tease out hope from the grassed over layers while acknowledging that histories are 'not easily chased away' (*Grundstück,* 2004*).*[233]

[232] *Youme Meyou* can also be interpreted as a critique of reunited Berlin which has erased the traces of difference between East and West into bland consumerism. This song, *Die Befindlichkeit des Landes* and *Grundstück* are further discussed in Chapter 9:4d *Bird's-eye View and the new Berlin.*

[233] *Grundstück* did provide the musicians with the opportunity to create music from the ruins with supporters, family and friends.

However, *Anarchitekur* (*Musterhaus 1,* April 2005) seems less hopeful; the 46 minute piece consists of muted sounds which periodically collide with a chant of '*anarchitekur'* as if at a squatter barricade protest; but the muted sounds persist, unaffected. The city (now the Berlin Republik) is no longer threatened by barricade music*;* it is impervious to *Anarchitecture*. Hence, it is perhaps no surprise that Bargeld, who favoured Libeskind's architectural *Riss* for Potsdamer Platz[234] sounds pessimistic about Berlin's more recent neubauten: 'I can hear Speer laughing now, because they have effectively built Germania for him….it's not as big, maybe, but we're in a different century, fighting the information war, and you don't need to have that size of monument anymore' (Gill, *The Independent*, 31 March 2000, NBOA, sourced 26 November 2006).

These four chapters have established Neubauten's philosophical, musical and historical 'deconstructing' contexts and influences. Three key words have emerged: Architecture (as undesired power structure and conversely, as utopian social structure), Noise (as anti-formulaic sound and requiring participatory listening) and Berlin (as layers and voids of history and provider of sonic playgrounds). These have provided the group, as *Nachgeborenen* musicians, with a methodology and subject matter for re-invention.

The next five chapters (Part Two) examine this methodology and subject matter of re-invention through five areas - the group's use of the body, instrumentation and site, the voice, the scream and song-text. I argue that the

[234] 'His drawings left the centre totally empty, showing instead a series of directions; Moscow this way and so on… it was a way showing the world that we are like the remains of an explosion' (Bargeld in Gray: 26 March 2000: NBOA, sourced 26 November 2006). Also see Chapter 1:2b.

approaches to these five areas are strategies *against* the conformist interpretation of these performative aspects and that these provide the practical illustrations of Neubauten's philosophy of music as outlined in Chapter 1 and of their artistic roots and influences as explored in Chapters 2, 3 and 4. I use this argument to provide evidence not only for their musical importance and achievement, but also to identify the group as key Artaudian performers.

Part Two – **PERFORMING DESTRUCTION**

Truly the world ought to belong to the singers and the dancers…

(J.M. Coetzee/Maria Zinfert, Warten auf die Barbaren, 2005)

One of the shafts in Libeskind's Jewish Museum, Berlin; the floor is littered with metal masks on which one is asked to walk (Photograph taken by author, 11.06)

I am the Angel of Despair. With my hands I dispense ecstasy, numbness, oblivion, the lust and the torment of bodies. My language is silence, my song the scream. Terror dwells in the shadows of my wings….I am the knife with which the dead man cracks open his coffin. I am the one who will be. My flight is the rebellion, my sky the abyss of tomorrow

(Heiner Müller, *The Task* in Malkin, 1999, p. 87).

Prologue: '***They were always quoting Artaud.'*** [235]

Under the sun of torture, which shines equally on all the continents of this planet, his texts blossom. Read on the ruins of Europe, they will be classics

(Heiner Müller on Artaud in Von Henning,1995, p.xii).

Antonin Artaud was briefly mentioned in Chapter 1 as a key practitioner and theorist for Neubauten. His radical ideas for performance as expressed in *The Theatre and its Double* (1938) form the backbone of the following five chapters. As previously stated, I present these as strategies *against* the body (in performance), *against* instrumentation and site (in performance) *against*, the voice and scream (in performance) and *against* the (performance) text as the practical evidence for Neubauten's positive destructive philosophy as discussed in the Context chapters and as working ideas of Artaudian performance.

Artaud's performance ideas, usually expressed as '*Theatre of Cruelty'* after his two manifestoes in *The Theatre and it Double,* are considered difficult (indeed, impossible, according to Stephen Barber, 1993, p. 44)[236] to put into practice. He wanted these to be 'in a constant state of self-destruction and self- reconstruction' (Barber, 1993, p. 66). The examples cited tend to be interpretations fuelled by the particular artist's own agenda and most are theatrical experiments; for example, Peter Brook, Jerzy Grotowski, Charles Marowitz, Julian Beck and Judith Malina in the 1960s; Heiner Müller (and his collaborations with Robert Wilson), the Wooster Group, Mabou Mines, dance

[235] Jessamy Calkin expressed this to me about Neubauten during her time in the 1980s as their tour manager (interview with author 15 July 2008).
[236] S. Barber, *Antonin Artaud, Blows and Bombs,* London, Faber & Faber Ltd, 1993.

companies such as Pina Bausch's Wuppertal or DV8 and puppetry such as Faulty Optic.[237] Far less attention has been given to what Artaud wrote about musical performance despite David Tudor's championing of this as 'aesthetic violence, and purposeful':

> It was a real breakthrough for me, because my musical consciousness in the meantime had changed completely…I had to put my mind in a state of non-continuity- not remembering- so that each moment is alive (Holzaepel, 2002, p.171).[238]

Few writers have noted that contemporary 'popular' music performers (from the Velvet Underground to Diamanda Galas – in particular, Japanese experimentalists like Haino, Acid Mothers Temple, Les Razilles Dénudes and Boredoms) also have employed the rigorous, disciplined excess of Artaud's ideals of a total (aimed at the whole anatomy) experience for both artist and spectator. This totality should, according to Artaud, include sound, light, space, visuals, movement, colour and voice. These should infect (Artaud's metaphor of the theatre as a plague) the ears and eyes and the breast of the spectator with the rigour and passion which Artaud felt was so lacking on his text-bound stage - without being gratuitous.[239]

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[237] Müller and Bausch blended their form of Artaud with Brechtian EpicTheatre.This is not unusual for there is a commonly held purpose in activating the audience although with Brecht it is for political discussion; the interpretation of Artaud's intended reception is more diverse. Douglas Kahn names three Artauds: Body Artaud for the Beat Poets - Ginsberg and McClure, the Musical Artaud for Black Mountain College - Cage and Tudor and the Theatrical Artaud - Living Theatre (1999, pp.322-358). Contemporary renderings of works by composers such as Cage, Xenakis or Heiner Goebbels can also have strong Artaudian aspects.

[238] John Holzaepfel, *Cage and Tudor* in D. Nicholls (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to John Cage,* pp.169-85, CUP, 2002.

[239] Some musicians – e.g. Mötley Crüe, Bauhaus and John Zorn- have dedicated works to Artaud.

To my knowledge, only one writer on Artaud, Stephen Barber in *Blows and Bombs* (1993, p.69) makes a passing reference to the work of Einstürzende Neubauten in this context – this I think is a glaring omission for Artaud sits at the heart of their work.[240] His ideas are present in their philosophy of music with its shamanistic and mystical properties from the apocalypse to utopia. His ideal performance style can be found in their balance of physical excess, risk and rigour and their use of created, found and unusual instruments which are often extensions of their Constructivist 'set'. Neubauten's willingness to experiment on the boundaries of music, to find new sounds beyond the traditional scale, their use of non-studio/music venues, Bargeld's expressive gestural (often invoking) delivery and his use of non-phonemic sounds and screams, all bear the influence of Artaud's aims for performance which although released from any director/writer dictates, is still discplined. Many of the group's textual concerns (e.g. cosmic, biological and mythical themes) are similar to those advocated by Artaud for his theatre of the future; these employ an analogous language of disease, fire, dance, dreams and the nervous system dismissing both capitalism and Marxism for a 'revolution based on fire, magic and anatomical transformation (Eshleman & Bador, 1995, p.15). Finally, Bargeld's creation of texts from dreams, lists and chance devices also uphold Artaud's desired avoidance of the 'psychological conflicts of man and battlefields of moral passions' (Corti, 1970, p.51).

[240] Simon Reynolds (2006, p. 484) acknowledges Bargeld's personal interest in Artaud during the 1980s. It was during November 2004 that Bargeld confirmed to me how important Artaud had been to Neubauten. He mentioned his reading of *The Theatre and its Double*, in the late 1970s, and his ownership of a recording of Artaud's vocalisations, particularly highlighting to me Artaud's scream.

Although the following argument (through the necessity of a structure) subdivides the Artaudian elements into five chapters, this should not detract from the polysensory nature of an Artaudian performance in which the whole spectatoring and performing body (in particular, the ears for Neubauten) are assaulted as Artaud's cruelty demanded and rendered exposed, vulnerable and infected.

Chapter Five: **... STRATEGIEN GEGEN den Körper**

['Strategies against the body']

NBOA (sourced 10 October 2006) uncredited photograph of Blixa Bargeld, image given to author for use in this study

> I've worked too long in this trade - it will always be a part of me. The physical aspect is very important to me. Music works physically because it is a physical entity. The decisive moment is when you reach the point where you can go no further, where you have no more strength left, where the material you are working on begins to do something to your body
>
> (F.M. Einheit www.galarec.ru/catalog/default.asp accessed 15.12.06).

> The aim in performance is to go beyond the capability of rational thought acting without your active mind at this point you are not thinking of any arty concept you might have or interesting intellectual idea, you just have direct connection with what you are doing
>
> (Mark Chung in Watson's *TransEurope Express*, *New Musical Express,* 6 April 1985, NBOA sourced 14 February 2007).

Introduction

Einstürzende Neubauten are a very visual, theatrical music group; Bargeld has stated: 'I could say tomorrow that we are no longer a band, but a theatre group and still be doing the same stuff' (Maeck, 1996, p.51).[241] Hence it seems fitting to begin this core section of their anti-strategies with their corporeality in performance. This corporeality, however, needs clarification. Although Neubauten have frequently used the word *Schmerz* ['pain'] with their music, the interpretation of their 'corporeality' is closer to that described by Henry Cowell, as the *presence* of the body in performance, and not its direct use or abuse as a performative tool.[242] In fact, the group's description of their music as *Schmerz* is best understood (after Beuys) through Artaud's use of the term *'cruauté'* for the experience of his theatre which 'wakes us up heart

[241] Bargeld is arguing here that the lines between music, performance, art, installation work are blurred and that as a musician he wishes to force people to keep redefining these boundaries.

[242] In using the term, corporeality, Cowell was implying the *presence* of the musician with the sound objects as opposed to what he derided as 'computerised like crazy' (Mirapaul M. *New York Times*, 5 June 2003).

and nerves' (Corti. 1999, p.64).[243] Artaud (Ibid., pp. 77-78) explained in *First Letter, Paris, September 1932 to J.P*. that by 'cruelty' he meant:

> Strictness, diligence, unrelenting decisiveness, irreversible and absolute determination [….] Above all, cruelty is very lucid, a kind of strict control and submission to necessity. There is no cruelty without consciousness, without the application of consciousness.

Neubauten have used similar terms referring to their music as 'acts of controlled frenzy' (*Headcleaner*, 1993), being 'fully conscious' (Maeck, 1996, p.33) and that 'Discipline is really necessary' (Ibid., p. 43*). Die Wunde* ('the wounds') are frequently referenced by Neubauten (e.g. *Seele Brennt*) but these are not self-inflicted as part of the artwork or an expression of abjection aimed to test the limits of the audience; they result from the exploration of the music on the receptive, sensitised body of the performer and the recipient - the ears are wounds ('*meine Ohren sind Wunden' Die genaue Zeit,* 1983). This is present in Artaud's conviction that cruelty in performance would eradicate the theatre of diversion and second-hand psychology (also disparaged by Brecht in his *Theatre Poems*)[244] and help to sensitize the whole spectator as a witness to, and a sharer in, the spectacle.

[243] Hence, the reading of Neubauten's early work as harmful rock, dangerous and invoking deliberately chaotic demolition of self, site and audience is as titillating and sensational, and as unhelpful, as similar misreadings of Artaud's cruelty as 'carnal laceration' as he himself dismissed such responses (Corti, 1999, p.77). Such sensational reporting of stages burnt, drilled, demolished and flesh sliced is referenced in *Hör mit Schmerzen* (Maeck, 1996) and *No Beauty without Danger* (Dax, 2005). An interesting diversion would be to consider this within the shades of corporeality in German performance from Dadaism/Cabaret to the Viennese Aktionism/Tanztheater and Electronic/Techno.

[244] See *Poems 1913 -1956,* Willet & Manheim, 1976.

Having introduced the idea that Neubauten's corporeality contains qualities of Artaud's Cruelty, Sections 1 to 5 now develop this interpretation of the group's performance through the context of post-war dance and body art, Artaudian ideas of the anti-body and reduction and Nietzsche's dance against gravity. Section 6 focuses on four examples of Neubauten's corporeality in performance and concludes with an overview of their present physicality.

1: Tanz für den Untergang

> I would believe only in a god who could dance. And when I saw my devil I found him serious, thorough, profound, and solemn: he was the spirit of gravity- through him all things fall […] Come, let us kill the spirit of gravity!
>
> (Nietzsche, *Thus spoke Zarathustra*: 1883-5, 2005, p.38)

Dance is the key thread in the following analysis of Neubauten's use of the body in performance. This is partly because some of dance's late 20th century developments reflect those of Neubauten but also because of the relevance of Artaud's and Nietzsche's philosophical concept of dance as a medium for a new reawakened mankind. Neubauten's sympathy for contemporary dance has been confirmed by Bargeld for 'dance companies have often tended to be more responsive to Neubauten's music than other art forms' (interview with author 5 November 2004). In assessing the origins of Neubauten's engagement with dance (and their many references to dance's effects) the ideas of Artaud and Nietzsche often seem interchangeable. However, Artaud's concept of organless wrong-way round dance as expressed in '(w)hen you have given (man) a body without organs, then you will have

delivered him from all his automatisms and restored him to his true liberty' *(*Eshleman & Bador, 1995, p.307)[245] and Nietzsche's battle against gravity (articulated in the opening quotation) belong to Neubauten's later, more reflective work which concerns itself with the body's unnecessary baggage and weight. Earlier more youthful work often explored the Dionysian, frenzied dance of annihilation through fire, plague, dismemberment and a senstivised central nervous system.

The type of dance being considered here is Tanztheater. This is a form of physical theatre which originated in Germany; it blends dance and everyday movement with theatre, speech, music, an unusual use of props and set and an avoidance of any obvious narrative. Tanztheater's influential partner in excess, Butoh (which Eshleman & Bador comment 'looks like something (Artaud) had planned,' 1995, p.40*),* is also significant for Neubauten (the group shared some performance values with Butoh as well as working with two Butoh companies). Apart from Neubauten's collaboration with dance troupes, there is dance in their practice; Bargeld 'dances' his texts in a visual, playful and gestural fashion, reminiscent of a shaman, a cabaret artist or an Oriental (Nō, Butoh, Suzuki) performer.[246] His feet (he nearly always performs barefoot) are engaged in a pattern of small manoeuvres while his arms and hands, interacting with his face and torso, visualise the textual and sonic content of the work. Some of the more literary texts, for example *Haus der*

[245] *Watchfiends and Rack Screams,* C. Eshleman & B. Bader (eds/trans.) Boston, Exact Change, 1995.
[246] Bargeld's delivery of the scream has a particular dance quality which is discussed below in Chapter 8.

Lüge, Sie Lächelt and Unvollständigkeit, have a set dramaturgy which Bargeld enacts.

Barefoot Bargeld, Amsterdam, 04.04.05 (Photograph taken by K Shryane for the author)

London and Brussels 22 & 21. 05.08 (Photographs taken by K Shryane for the author)

As well as Bargeld's textual dance, there is the physical interaction of the musicians with their site and their 'instruments'- what Maeck calls (1996, p.64) 'their carefully orchestrated assault on their materials.' This approach echoes

Artaud's call for a new physical and riskful relationship with the stage set and objects and is further discussed in Chapter 6. Finally, there is the employment of the body and dance as a textual theme (through references to cells, DNA, carbon, heavenly bodies, fire, dreams and travel as discussed in Chapter 9) and the use of the prehistoric dancing figure embodied in their logo which suggests first a ritualistic, tribal dancer and later, a light, airborne performer, radiating out and connected in.

2: Schmerz ist Wahreit

[pain is truth] - (Coetzee/Zinfert, *Warten auf die Barbaren,* 2005/6)

Jeder Tag kostet mich Wunden
Dabei bin ich schon jetzt
Zerschunden und völlig blutverschmiert
[Every day cost me wounds/though I'm already/ wrecked and festooned with blood]
(*Seele Brennt,* 1985)

Previously I have placed the work of Einstürzende Neubauten both within the new German youth music of the post- *Politgruppe/Kosmische* era and within the international noise-music avant-garde; here, I consider it as part of the 'post-modern' performance revolt against the primacy of language and conventional beauty in art. One of the main effects of this reaction was that the body became viewed as a medium just as valuable in discoursing realities as the spoken word and perhaps (post-Holocaust) more honest.[247] As part of

[247] This intentionally disruptive, out-of-frame response is used by Heiner Müller in his opening of *Hamletmaschine.* Hamlet, the rational being, with his back to the ruins of Europe talks to the surf: '*blah, blah, blah*.' Language's loss of credibility is captured in the foregrounding of

this, dance (particularly Tanztheater), Body Art and Performance Happenings such as Viennese Aktionism, gathered pace in Germany during the 1960s; many aspects of this led directly out of the student movement's challenge to parental and governmental hypocrisy and artistic conservativism. Here the bodily pain involved in extreme performance was seen as a positive countercultural strategy; to have pain was to have a kind of certainty amidst the fragmentation of contemporary West German life. Perhaps such a strategy might implicate, offend and even change the viewer. The more extreme Viennese Aktionists, Herman Nitsch and Rudolf Schwarzkogler in particular, wished, through the bodily violence they performed (or filmed) in their rituals, to penetrate what they saw as an anaesthetized, repressed society –and possibly with their staged scenarios of humiliation, project the wartime crimes of their parents' generation. More recently, Switzerland's Schimpfluch (meaning 'abuse') Aktion Gruppe (a fluid collective mainly of Rudolf Eb.er, Joke Lanz and Dave Phillips) combine the Aktionist body tactics with noise/music performance which are released as audioworks – an interesting development - as noise artists have often acknowledged the Viennese Aktion movement (for example, Steven Stapleton dedicated an album to Rudolf Schwarzkogler, and Merzbow, a work to Otto Muehl).

The celebration of the deliberately unglamorous, working body in an equally abject working playground (Lanz is particularly interested, as Sudden Infant, in the mental world of the child) can be found in a diverse range of artists such as Joseph Beuys, Otto Muehl, Vita Acconi and Carolee Schneemann. It may

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the body, of Ophelia's undrowned, abused, abusing corps, not Hamlet's rational machine-typewriter.

be a step too far to argue that Neubauten's early work in similar conditions, was also deliberately *Ordeal Art* or *Transgressive Art* (the descriptions given to the body art and social sculptures of these artists) but there are links which cannot be ignored; in particular, a shared belief in the authenticity not of verbal language, but of the body's meat language, as a way to infect /inflame others, as expressed in *Vanadium-i-ching* (1983), and a desire to create difficult spectatorship which can be aptly described as 'a thorn in our eye.' [248]

However, it is not a step too far to view the growth of Tanztheater in Germany in the 1970s, as a prerequisite for some aspects of Neubauten's work as Tanztheater grew out of the political and cultural concerns of the Left (as did the new German music – see Chapter 2) and challenged the more time-honoured classical dance forms for their reliance on fantasy, order and beauty. Its most famous exponent, Pina Bausch who founded Tanztheater Wuppertal in 1973, employed *Ausdruckstanz* [a form of expressionism] which mixed children's play and everyday mannerisms with intensity and pain and in which the dancers never sought to hide the extremes to which they pushed their bodies. Bausch worked with a Brechtian use of gestus (which communicated without counterpoint text) so that spectators did not restrict themselves to a single viewpoint and a Müller overload of onstage images so that the spectator had nothing comfortable to take home. Her use of stages which were variously littered with earth, water, bricks, dirt, flowers or

[248] The German expression - *ich steck dich an* – translates as both infect and inflame which relates to the Artaudian concepts of plague and fire invoked to affect change through positive destruction. 'A thorn in our eye' is Heiner Müller's description of the effect of Pina Bausch's Tanztheater; it is cited from his poem dedicated to Bausch, *Blood is in the Shoe* (Müller, H. *Germania,* (trans.) B. & A. Schütze, New York, Semiotext(e), 1990, p.105.

discarded objects presented an antithesis to the media-conscious, clean dance performance emanating from other Western countries; for example, her performers in *Das Frühlingsopfer (*1975) emerged out of the fierce, painful event, unglamorously sweating, with costumes sticking to heaving, dishevelled bodies which are covered in wet soil. Bausch's use of these messy hybrid, household materials set in alienated but familiar landscapes, her use of the repetitive rituals of everyday idiosyncratic moves, her foregrounded process, the effort and awareness of her witnesses (who are required to look again and *differently*) was replicated in the dirt, sweat and effort of Neubauten's early ritualistic performances amidst machinery, debris and found objects. Hence it is no surprise that Neubauten's sound and performance style seemed so appropriate for such dance groups.

This shared aesthetic of the reading of the body as both the life and the art, required a different kind of understanding which Peggy Phelan called (1993, p.150) metonymy instead of metaphor. Whereas metaphor deals with words, metonymy Phelan said, deals with the grammar of the body (which similarly disappears to represent something else); it is ritual, pain, risk and 'death' which is shared with the spectator, not meaning. Such performance acts included not just Bausch's somnambulist dancers ritualistically seeking comfort or contact from shuffled, discarded chairs (*Café Müller)* but also the more extreme Aktionists who staged performances which explored the vulnerability of the human body occasionally to the point of obliteration. In such acts the flesh was the material whether it was the vagina yielding up the script (Schneemann, *Interior Scroll*, 1975) or the mouth negating the penis or

marking the body in bites (Acconi, *Conversions*: 1971 and *Trademarks:* 1970). These hitherto 'private' acts were made public and called for witnesses. The performing body was thus no longer the passive recipient of social institutions and power, but an active agent which was testing out, remaking and rearticulating identity and social relationships.

Despite the above references and the shared rejection of the militarised or consumerised body, Neubauten, even in their early days, were not deliberately cutting (Abramovikov), hanging (Stelarc), biting (Acconci), shooting (Burden) or transmuting (Horn) their bodies for their performances, although bruised, bloodied and blistered hands and arms were certainly not unusual. However, these were due to the group's engagement with heavy machinery, debris and building materials as instrumentation - both in the procuring and the playing – especially the beating of metal on metal which damaged their tendons and joints).[249] Such wounds were not intentionally inflicted as proof of a new (or no) aesthetic; if they were worn with pride, it was more in celebration of the part that they might have played in the 'collapse' of formulaic music and the search for new sounds: 'Traces inscribed on the body will no longer be graphic incisions but wounds received in the destruction of the West, its metaphysics and its theatre, the stigmata of this pitiless war' (Derrida on Artaud, 1978, p.188). Whatever the blood-letting, it was for Neubauten, an accidental side effect of the intense, improvisatory nature of

[249] Bargeld joked in interview (5 November 2004) that he could date each live performance by the scars on his body; Unruh also explained in interview (13 February 2007) that Einheit, in particular, was careless of his body's safety and would ecstatically drive himself on stage to his physical limits. Maeck (1996) recounts some of the more sensational accidents in *Hör mit Schmerzen;* for example, Einheit's sliced knee (p.66). Dax's interviews (2005) reaffirm the unintentionality of these accidents (pp.82-85): 'it was the brutality with which we played […] which led to things getting destroyed. It was never intended.'

the process and performance – 'Accidents happen out of a certain liveliness and passion' (Bargeld in Dax, 2005, p.85) - not part of a deliberate dramaturgy, as it has been in the work of Neubauten's near contemporaries and fellow Industrialists, Throbbing Gristle or for the above mentioned Schimpfluch.

Despite the difference in intent pinpointed above, some of Neubauten's early research–'you could describe the first period of the Neubauten as research work[…] we explored sound, noise and mental conditions too' (Einheit in Dax, 2005, p.89) - initially does not seem vastly disparate from Arnulf Rainer's (Viennese Aktionist) use of his body as a paint brush until it bled. For example, Bargeld's amplified body (with a microphone taped to his chest) has served as a *Schlagzeug* (*Durstiges Tier* in 1982) for Einheit to beat. There are also references to Bargeld experimenting with his vocalisation while his prone body was stood upon by others. However, these explorations fit just as appropriately into the investigations by sound artists such as Christof Migone who explains that he amplifies his body parts - his mouth, tongue, scratching dandruff, cracking bones and farts because '(t)he body is a noisy place. It emits and transmits […] the orchestral renderings of our innards are rarely appreciated for their musicality [….] of decompositional destructuring' (LaBelle. 2006, p.139).[250]

[250] There are further references to associated 'body art' practice, especially in relation to Japanese Gutai performance in Chapter 6.

3: *Antibodies- 'speak to me in plague language'* *(Vanadium-i-ching,* 1983*)*

We intend to sing

The love of danger

The habit of energy

And fearlessness

(Marinetti: British Library: *Breaking the Rules* exhibition, 19.03.08*)*

There are several video clips available of early Neubauten performances, in particular from Maeck's *Liebeslieder* (1993), which demonstrate the sheer physicality, busy-ness and genuine risk undertaken by the group. Bargeld aptly described his work (in very Artaudian terms) as squeezing himself like a lemon, using his whole person as a test object, putting his whole life forward as an experiment in order to '(k)eep expanding the music, forcing people to keep redefining the boundaries and then to go outside of it again and so on, until there is nothing left that is not music' (Maeck, 1986, p.51). Although, as stated above, the more deliberate mistreatment of their bodies did not take place on stage, Neubauten did cultivate conscious neglect off stage which, because of the desire to merge art with life, infiltrated the performances. This 'neglect' became an alternative form of corporeal rebellion. In the *New Musical Express* of 15 September 1984, Chris Bohn (*A Waltz through the Hardcore,* NBOA sourced 27 November 2006) analysed Neubauten's corporeality in terms of Artaud's abased bodies and antibodies: 'They find a base for their abased bodies in his Theatre of Cruelty which established the body as a total artwork to be wrenched and wrought into a new language that by-passes speech.' His first conclusion was that the antibodies were the

plague incited by Artaud to eradicate the bourgeois sickness of complacency and materialism, a viewpoint also expressed by Klaus Maeck (1996, p.71):

> We are all becoming infected, let's sit back and enjoy the disease. People feel threatened by EN and that's good, really good. If anyone can upset the balance and infuriate the fat cats who have opted for the comfy sofa and compact disc setup, then they must be commended.

But it is Bohn's further development of this which is pertinent here; that the 'anti-bodies' are those who waged a war of liberation against their own bodies in defiance of the appearance-obssessions of Western society.[251] This war of liberation occurred in Neubauten as a deliberately lived neglect of the body, and it is this technique of bodily 'abuse' which is more relevant in terms of the group than any performative 'sado-masochism' on well-prepared bodies.[252]

The extent of this neglect is evidenced by photographs of, and witness comments about, Neubauten's appearance and behaviour for they cultivated (Maeck, Rock Session 6, 1982, p.107)[253] an *' image so kaput'* with pinned, found clothing and 'rat' hair cuts. They described this positively as 'fascinating

[251] Bohn explores the anti-body as anti-the-State body (*Tape Delay,* 1987, p.10) – the state being interested in the citizen's body only in so far as it is fit to work. He calls this anti-body the Abject and describes his/her night-time, downward journey, his hole and her pain as better than feeling nothing (see *Seele brennt*). The Abject realises that it is pointless railing against the superpowers for, Bohn concludes, all he owns is here – his hole. I have already referred to Bohn's use of Kristeva's work in discussing Neubauten in Chapter 1 but I do not pursue this further; apart from Bargeld's lack of acknowledgement of Kristeva (interview with author, 24 April 2006), her ideas omit Neubauten's positivity.

[251] Bohn has pointed to a stark comparison with Test Department whose execution of an occasionally similar sound with metal and debris, produced near perfect physiques developed to meet the punishing work, as it did with the Californian percussionist Z'ev, and Black Flag's Henry Rollins (15 September 1984 article, NBOA, sourced 27 November 2006).

[253] An article loaned by D. Matthew Jeffries, German Department, University of Manchester.

creative neglect' (Ibid.). It permeated their appearance, performance and philosophy, and was often driven by efforts to outdo each other in opposing the consumer society. Bargeld's purposeful bodily decay was particularly notable. He developed a habit of wearing black rubber; this included a rubber coat, trousers and boots even in summer, earning him the description of Death in Rubber because of his thinness and paleness. Fritz Brinckmann commented that his vitality seemed even more of a contrast to his apparently imminent demise, for the people who met him always had a sense of having only just caught him alive (in Dax, 2005, p.10). There are many descriptions of his yellow, taut, flesh, lanky frame clad in black, eyes popping above gaunt high cheek bones with one lined in black (Clockwork Orange style), bad teeth, sections of scalp razored, hair pulled into complete disarray and partly torn out, with clumps of it stapled to his waistcoat like a hair shirt.[254]

[254] Some of this comes close to Jean-Louis Barrault's description of Artaud in 1932. (Eshleman & Bador, 1995, p. 44) In fact, Bargeld recalled (interview with author 5 November 2004) that his neglect of his teeth brought to mind Anaïs Nin's comment that to be kissed by Artaud (who had a similar mouth full of bad teeth) was to be drawn toward death, toward insanity (Barber.1993, p.69). Hilsberg also explained that the group's razoring of holes in their hair was a direct reference to the prisoners in the concentration camps and to Gudrun Ensslin's protest hair cut: 'it's a conscious way to relate personally to German history' (in Dax, 2005, p.66).

Bargeld, 1981, photograph sent to author by Wolfgang Müller, reproduced here with permission from Wolfgang Müller)

Nick Cave in Listen with Pain (Maeck. 1996, p.86) described Bargeld thus: '(h)is skin cleared to his bones, his skull was an utter disaster, scabbed and hacked and his eyes bulged out of their orbits like a blind man's.' Another description from 1983 described Bargeld's face as 'cadaverous beyond belief' (Maeck, 1996, p.52).

In summary, Bohn (*The Wire,* 1999, p.82) assessed Neubauten's bodily neglect to be a deliberate mockery of many of the values of post-war West Germany; their fascination with decay and dirt, the intensive toil on stage and its resulting noise became ways of breaking out of the cultural hollow of the *Wirtshaftswunder*. This behaviour was, of course, heightened by a mix of

amphetamines, a squatters' life-style, Kreuzberg's 24 hour culture, frenetic street politics and a desire to speed up the apocalypse. The physical acquisition of 'instruments' ('leaping over tall wire fences to obtain materials' - interview with author 5 November 2004), the manipulation of large scale, potentially dangerous, industrial debris, the choice of site-specific experiments (the top bell section of a disused Kreuzberg water tower, a small inner steel cavity of a flyover) and the growing number of international gigs and long term commitments like Zadek's *Andi* in Hamburg, added to the relentlessly physical nature of the work. The combination of these elements brought its toll which *Zwölf Städte* (*Fünf auf der nach oben offenen Richterskala,* 1987) effectively captures in its depiction of being on tour:

Zwölf Städte durchfliehen
Wieder und wieder durchfliehen
Alles mal zwölf….
Diese Einzellwesen entledigt sich
Entledigt den Mund der Ohren
Die Lippen hängend
ja trauriger
Herpes gleich. Poren in dessen Winkel
Besetzend, lauschen:
Und doch Erbrochenes
Für aufgewühlte Innereien
Und aufgewühlte Innereien
Für Erbrochenes verstehen

Zwölf Städte

['Running through Twelve cities
again and again on the run
all times twelve....
this singular being cell bares itself
bares the mouth of the ears
hanging on lips
even sadder
like herpes, occupying pores in its
corner, eavesdrops: and yet nausea
held for churned-up entrails
and churned-up entrails
held for nausea/twelve cities']

The intense, frenetic preparations, performances and life-style of the early years became inextrictably linked with Neubauten's musicology and philosophy and illustrated their sincere desire to extend musical performance and its reception. It was this quality of sincerity which gave them the status as intensely 'present' musicians: 'the main reason we play to an audience is because we want them as proof, as witnesses, to see the intensity in us' (Bargeld in Maeck, 1996, p.49). Hence, it is this 'presence' and its desire to *infect* audiences' senses and bodies which remains the most effective interpretation of Neubauten's corporeality.[255] Artaud's displacement of the

[255] However, Neubauten were astute enough to realise that audiences came to expect the heightened physical risk in the band's performances and life-style; consequently, they have continued to transform their work and themselves in order to avoid predictability. Today there

focus of artistic performance from safety to danger, from health to delirium and his belief in the essential drives of creative impulse to be found in danger and delirium are indispensable to a discussion of Neubauten's work. His argument that in the 'anguished and catastrophic times' that we live in, the last thing we needed was art that was there just to divert us; we needed art which 'arouses deep echoes within us' (Corti, 1999, p.64) finds resonance with Neubauten's artistic intentions. [256]

4: Artaud's Dance and Butoh

> Dance, Dance, Dance to the radio…
>
> (Ian Curtis, *Transmission,* 1980)

This section discusses the dance form of Butoh and its links with Artaud and Neubauten. Artaud saw dance as: […] 'how the body patrols, tests and defends itself from obliteration: so, the body engaged in this act must by essence be distorted, painful and alert- as well as in ecstasy at its own movements and gestures' (Barber, 1999, p.105). In *Pour en finir avec le jugement de dieu* (1947) he describes an act of 'radical anatomy' which, in excising god and the body's organs, will instigate 'a delirious, wrong-way-

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is obviously less bodily risk involved in their music, but the group do still adhere to Artaud's belief that performance should be an immediate and physical experience. Many current aspects of Neubauten's performance strategies now bear similarities with German theatre/cabaret in their strong, gestural drama, scenography, intense directional lighting, sonic props and mise en scene. Bargeld joked during the *Alles Wieder Offen* tour that he was 'Marlene Dietrich in a parallel universe' (4 May 2008).

[256] Although already mentioned in relation to other more abject Industrial groups, it is important to emphasize that Neubauten have always described their work as celebratory and without Artaud's disgust with 'materialistic temporary mankind, carrion-man' (Corti, 1970, p.31). Their use of Artaud's concept of Body without Organs (BwO) is as a positive strike against gravity and not one of regression or psychosis. A similar viewpoint is expressed by G.Deleuze and F.Guattari in *A Thousand Plateaus,* B. Massumi, (trans.) London, The Athlone Press Ltd., 1988. Here BwO is described as 'desire' - an egg which is in a continually self-constructing milieu (pp. 164-5).

round dance of disciplined will' (Ibid., p.100). These are apt introductory comments for Butoh, a movement form which means stamping dance. In fact, Stephen Barber suggests that Hijikata Tatsumi (1928-1986) one of the inventors of Ankoku Butoh (Dance of Utter Darkness) in the late 1950s with Ōno Kazuo (born 1906), was the only artist ever to advance Artaud's work.[257]

Ōno Kazuo, *Just Visiting This Planet*, Peter Sempel, 1991
(Photograph given to author by Sempel with permission to use)

Interestingly, both Butoh founders originally trained in the German *Neue Tanze* tradition (which gave rise to Tanztheater) but then sought a more Japanese method of expression which was particularly attracted by the grotesque and the absurd and which displayed an interest in pre-modern society.[258]

[257] He notes Hijikata's belief that the scream is the end point of dance as it creates a choreographed image of the body with all its extremes of sensation (Barber, 1999, p.105).
[258] This is another link between the arts of post war West Germany and Japan. Butoh which mixes Ausdrucktanz, mime and traditional Japanese theatre (both creators were influenced by Artaud and Genet), also contained a twin backlash against the traditional strict codification of earlier Japanese movement and the forced and rapid post-war Americanization of culture. German film director, Peter Sempel directed Ōno, Bargeld and Cave in his films, '*Just Visiting this Planet'* and *'Dandy'* and also directed *Ich tanze ins Licht,* a film about Ōno.

Bargeld, Ōno Kazuo & Cave (Sempel: *Just Visiting this Planet,* Hamburger Filmbűro e.V. given to author by Sempel with permission to use)

Evidence of Neubauten's work with Butoh dancers is present in Sōgo Ishii's film version of *Halber Mensch (1985*) and in their collaboration with Anita Saij's Nordic Butoh Dance Lab (1995), both of which are discussed Section 6. Similar to Neubauten's sound experiments, Butoh breaks with established performance rules and aims to bring the body back to its original state. The generally naked dancers dust their skins in ashen clay giving them (Roselee Goldberg, 1988, pp.206-7)[259] 'an appearance of part foetus part mummy symbolising the space between birth and death.' The movement of the dancers consists of exaggerated gestures born of rigorous physical training; it is either performed in utter silence or juxtaposed with shocking or discordant music (as in *Halber Mensch*). The effect is one of ritual and solemnity, playfulness and ecstasy. The essence of the work lies in the dancer metamorphosing, not in expressing an emotion or a person or an abstract idea. The aim is to push out human qualities to make space in the empty body for the other, be it a rooster, a landscape or water. The movement is derived

[259] R. Goldberg, *Performance Art*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1988.

from these inner images which are held within the body and not from conscious decisions made by the dancer. The focus is on the happening so concepts of 'being good' or other value judgments are irrelevant.

A similar act of emptying the body (as in *Redukt,* 2004, and *Unvollständigkeit,* 2007) has become a central theme in Neubauten's texts; earlier this was invoked as a body which could defy gravity (*Was ist ist,* 1996). This freeing (emptying or remaking) of the body is associated (for Neubauten) with the German word, *Sehnsucht* ['desire/longing'] which fuels the ability to push beyond the boundaries of immediately accessible life experiences (as in Butoh) towards a willingness to discard and reduce before any replacement is guaranteed.

The desired lightness of a ballast-free mankind provides a direct link with Nietzsche's utterances on gravity and dance. Neubauten never directly referred to the influence of Nietzsche on their work (during interviews) other than to comment on the philosopher's still problematic connections with the concept of a Super Race; however, he is invoked as '*Friedrich N Punkt'* [stop] in *ZNS* and writers such as Chris Bohn have described the group's early performance style as 'Dionysian'. Despite this, Nietzsche appears too dark for Neubauten's social positiveness In comparison, Jim Morrison (also frequently cited as a Nietzschean/Artaudian musician) was depicted as having a fascination with death and a relationship of an artist-tyrant with his public which suggests a kind of (Nietzschean) superiority and arrogance which Neubauten do not employ – rather they pursue an aura of fallibility as

discussed in Chapter 10.[260] Hence, my use of Nietzsche's ideas in this context, are limited to the following section concerning gravity as depicted by both Nietzsche and Neubauten.

5. Nietzsche's Dance

> Only in dance do I know how to tell the parable of the highest things**...**
>
> (Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*: 'The Grave Song': Martin, 2005, p.98)[261]

Both Neubauten and Nietzsche vilify gravity. In the Neubauten oeuvre absolute liberation is demanded from Newton's gravity in *Was Ist Ist,* 1996, while Newton's 'mania' is expressed as the '*Apfelfalle'* ['apple pitfall'] in *Newtons Gravitätlichkeit, 2000)*. This heaviness is Zarathustra's arch-enemy; 'the spirit that Nietzsche opposes is the one he names as the spirit of gravity…it is the one that does not know how to incorporate knowledge' (Pearson, 2005, pp.49-50).[262] It is Nietzsche's *Übermensch* who is able to rid her/himself of the weight of pettiness, guilt, mediocrity, religion, material comfort and the will of others but if this mensch is interpreted as 'superior' then the ability to dance free takes on a discriminatory quality of the (super) person. However, Neubauten's desire for lightness does not suggest or support an elite dancing mensch (if *Über* is thus translated), rather it points to a more open possibility, an acceptance of one's incompleteness and the need to strive for something higher (as in Bloch's yearning). Hence, in the context of

[260] This is not intended to imply a connection between Morrison's Lords and Sheep and fascism; I have always understood Morrison's verbal disdain to be aimed at provoking his audience into action much as with the work of the Viennese Aktionists.
[261] F. Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra,* (trans.) C. Martin, New York, Barnes & Noble Classics, 2005.
[262] K. A. Pearson, *How to Read Nietzsche,* London: Granta Books, 2005.

Neubauten's work, Nietzsche's *Über* does not connote 'Above/Super' but *across, over or beyond:*

> There it was too that I picked up the word 'Superman' and that man is something that must be overcome, that man is a bridge and not a goal; rejoicing over his noontides and evenings, as advances to new dawns (Nietzsche, *Of Old and New Law-Tables,* section 3, 2005, p.169).

Pearson defines the 'over' Mensch as a rope between the animal and the dancer, 'a dangerous going-across' (Pearson, 1994, p.105). He cites Nietzsche's mankind as needing to go down in order to climb over and up and able to transfer wounds and hurts into light and flame. Similar ideas are found in Neubauten's texts from the recent calls to empty out the self (*Unvollständigkeit,* 2007) to the much earlier need to burn ('*Lasst unsre Seelen vom Schimmel befrein/vom Pilzwuchs befrein…lasst unsre Seelen abfackeln'* [*'* let us free our souls of mould, free them of fungal growth…let us torch our souls'*: Abfackeln,*1983]*.* A key text which can be effectively read as a Nietzschean condemnation of mediocrity, triviality and complacency is *Halber Mensch* (1985). Although Halber Mensch, described as *'du formlose Knete/aus der die Lebensgeister/den letzten Rest/Funken aussaugen'* ['you shapeless dough/from which life's spirits/suck the last/remaining sparks'] is told to '*Verwesen!* ['Decompose!'], the text is not about racial/class superiority or genetic selection. It is about the need for an attack on mediocre, passive living, for these *Halber Mensch 'bist gefesselt vom Abendprogramm'* ['are riveted to the evening programme'] for *'zu jeder vollen Stunde senden wir*

deine Wert' ['on the hour we broadcast your values']. It is the 'couch potato' (and possibly the brainwashed *Halber* Ossi and Wessi – the derogative colloquial terms for a person respectively from East or West Germany) who are being confronted. This state of being a *Durstiges Tier* ['Thirsty Animal', 1982] or the *Letztes Biest* ['Last Beast',1985] is found in other early Neubauten 'dance'-texts; these can be interpreted as Nietzsche's *last man* who is content to preserve self, take no risks, no experiments and settle for sameness (the half man). The reference to 'indolent cells', 'nothing's here' and 'paralysis' in *Durstiges Tier* supports this reading as does the word play on '*Hör- auf- Ruhr'* which can be interpreted either as a personal and pathetic 'stop–dysentery' or as an active public call of 'listen – revolt'.[263] In conclusion, Neubauten's texts do not view the ability to dance as the mark of an elite race (executed by artist-tyrants); neither is it an act of unrestrained irresponsibility and transistory drug-fuelled escape, but rather it is a way to clear space for self-change, to shed, bleed and burn and then, in the empty space to reach for a new potential.

Sections 1 to 5 have placed Neubauten's performing body within a context of post-war performance art, Artaudian criteria, Butoh, and Nietzsche's dance against gravity. I now focus on four examples of Neubauten's practice and conclude with an overview of their present physicality.

[263] The closing lines concerning the cell core breaking up new islands and perishing '*nach dem Brand'* ['after the blaze'] also offer an excellent example of the juxtaposing of the body politic and human explicit in its use of the word 'cell' relating to a sick person or a sick state (see Chapter 9:4b *The Body and Journey*).

6: Neubauten's Tanztheater

The first two examples of Neubauten's physicality in performance involve their collaboration with two contemporary dance companies, the Canadian group, La La La Human Steps for *Infante c'est Destroy* in Montreal, 1990 (NBOA:VHS:10.06) and Anita Saij's Nordic Butoh Dance Lab in *Katarsis II-Ødipus* (Copenhagen, 1995, NBOA:VHS: 10.06).[264] Bargeld's performance for La La La Human Steps (as depicted on the video archive extract) takes the form of a wild, shamanistic dance which has much in common with the dancers' own disciplined yet unrelenting, repetitive ferocity. His long limbs thrust, jag and pulse like an accelerated Expressionist actor. The movements and facial expressions are sharp and bird-like, yet always controlled. In *Yü-Gung,* Einheit scrapes amplified, suspended iron bars while gyrating and leaping - all executed with obvious pleasure and studied concentration to the rhythm. Downstage Unruh, on his knees works at rubbing and scraping metal as Bargeld's dance extends the width and depth of the stage. Everything is done with passion and exactness. The musicians' visual presentation and sound complement the extreme physicality and speed of the dancers.[265]

The group's movement in Suij's physical dance performance, *Katarsis II,* extends the ferocity described above (which fitted La La La Human Steps' own fast, ceaseless, street-break frenzy) into the more choreographed,

[264] Neubauten also provided music for the Swedish ballet *Armagedon* devised by Ulf Gadd, in Göteborg, 1987. The fragmented nature of the group's music seemed highly suited to the intensely angular and athletic movement of such companies.
[265] Bargeld has stressed that while working on the music for La La La Human Steps the US troops landed in Kuwait and following this media event during rehearsals had a profound effect on the work produced.

slowed and deliberate style required by Suij with its held and interrupted Suzuki-like moves.[266] For example, during *Headcleaner* Bargeld engages in a complex pattern of angular movements; he gesticulates at, and lectures the onlooker as if at a political rally. He places an arm behind his back as a cliché of power, hunches a shoulder and appears to parody Hitler in the manner of Brecht's *Arturo Ui.* The next 'scene' is a dream recall which consists of a tinny, repetitive tolling of the bell machine, a frightened whisper describing the dream, a long, oscillating tone (Chapter 4:2 *Verschwinden und Einstürzen)* and a chaotic explosion (and reversion) of The Beatles' 'All you need is love'. This sense of drama and role gives the work a mise en scene and suggests the collage style of disconnected snapshots used by Heiner Müller. The dancers in the sand pit below the musicians' gallery perform Butoh-influenced movements using bamboo, sand, each others' bodies and the walls in a strong, slow but finely tuned ritual of conflict, trial, rejection and reconciliation.

Halber Mensch (1985) directed by Sōgo Ishii with Neubauten and Byakkosha (a Butoh dance company) is located in a disused Tokyo ironworks with fire raging down one wall. The area is littered with obsolete machinery, pulleys, stagnant water and debris, reminiscent of something from an Otto Muehl Aktion. The musicians are initially depicted with their heads tied with wire suggesting a Rudolf Schwartzkogler body art performance or an image of Artaudian inside-out bodies. Ishii creates an apocalyptic site with long panning shots of scrap metal, piles of flickering TV sets, burning furnaces,

[266] Such physical development from cathartic, seemingly spontaneous improvisation to a more structured, deliberate form was taking place in the content of the work too with a growing presence of song structure and imagery.

rust, dripping water, and a nauseating heap of worms that crawl onto a shoe and seem to demolish a leg. On camera, Bargeld appears as a hypo-energetic Mephisto (or as Broadhurst aptly put it 'something from a Teutonic post-holocaust fairy tale,' 1999, p.154). The other musicians are depicted (often reflected through dark, oily water) toiling, bare-chested, sweating and dirty, with the machinery while fire explodes dangerously close to them. As with Bausch's Tanztheater, the effort and the dirt are not concealed but relished.

Bargeld, *Halber Mensch* (http://dvd.monstersandcritics.com)

Inanimate machinery and decay are juxtaposed with extreme, purposeful human effort and emotive images which pay homage to 2001 A *Space Odyssey.* The centrepiece of the work is Byakkosha's dance version of Neubauten's most Nietzschean/ Dionysian text *ZNS* ['Central Nervous System']. The dancers perform like grotesque, demonic actors from a Nō drama; they hurl themselves against the walls, beat their heads together and wield long samurai swords. Attached to their bodies, are tubes, chains and other extensions which suggest externalised body organs; their faces stare

frozen with open mouths, their slowed gestures are violent but controlled. The camera cuts between this and Bargeld's own very precise, robotic rhythmic dance; in doing so it captures exactly Artaud's desired balance of excess and control.

The stylised theatrical studio rendering of *Blume* on *Liederslieder* (Maeck, 1993, VHS) offers a sharp contrast with *Halber Mensch's* risky, visceral Artaudian physicality. Here the Neubauten members are costumed to represent a classical orchestra in black suits, crisp white shirts and black neck-ties. Ironically they stand armed not with traditional instruments, but with replicas of Russolo's noise inventions (Intonarumori) which require careful turning and adjusting. This the musicians do with playful, over-emphasized gesture and posed signalling to each other while the female singer (there are three in all) turns slowly on a small central revolve (like a display item) holding a large, brass megaphone to her lips. This megaphone is reproduced around the 'set' accurately reflecting the design feature of the Intonarumori.

Bargeld, dressed like the orchestra conductor, dances 'lightly' around the centralised singer with hand gestures, facial expressions and foot movements resembling the villain of a melodrama or cabaret.

The action takes place on a black and white chequered floor which emulates the much-cited photograph of Luigi Russolo with his assistant Ugo Piatti and the first orchestra of Intonarumori inventions. The visual playfulness is extended into the sound because Neubauten produce through the noise

machines which orginally bore names such as ‘howlers’, ‘exploders’, crumplers’, hissers’ and ‘scrapers’, not noise but a gentle, lyrical, trilingual duet.[267] Hence, the smug smiles and emphasised gestures of Hacke, Einheit, Chung and Unruh suggest a much enjoyed, shared joke on the expectation of ‘noise’ associated with both Russolo and Neubauten. This is enhanced by the filmic device of bouquets of flowers (the song is called ‘*Blume’)* periodically bursting out of the Intonarumoris’ megaphone speakers.[268] The lightness of movement and message reflect not only Nietzsche’s and Artaud’s desired state, but also points to Neubauten’s diverse performance style which ranges from the Dionysian frenzy of La La La Human Steps to this theatrically affectionate cabaret-influenced parody and hence, predicts the choreography of more recent work.

Blume video clip taken from *Liederslieder*, Maeck &Schenkel (1993, NBOA sourced 27 November 2006)

[267] There are three versions by three singers – English (Anita Lane), French (Diana Orloff) and Japanese (Etsuko Sakamaki-Haas).

[268] Bargeld confirmed in Halle (interview with author 24 April 2006) that this performance was in homage to the famous Russolo and Piatti photograph and to dislocate expectations of metal noise associated with Neubauten. The recreation of Russolo’s Intonarumori at the Estorick Collection (London October 2006) verified the detail of the set and props. The distinctive funnel design of the Intonarumori has been featured again on the cover of *Alles Wieder Offen* (2007) and the stage lanterns for *AWO* tour recalled those depicted in the original photograph. See Chapter 3 for Bargeld’s participation in Luciano Chessa’s celebration of the Intonarumori.

7: Present Dancing

Neubauten's use of their bodies in more recent live work, (the short April 2007 tour, London's Koko venue, Glasgow's *Triptych Festival*, Minehead's *All Tomorrow's Parties* and the *Alles Wieder Offen* European tour, 2008) is now choreographed within their Constructivist set and takes the form of a playful theatricality with various manoeuvres around, and with, their oversized 'instruments'.[269] Bargeld continues an actorly commitment to the presentation of the text whether it is linguistic (as in *a-Dada*) or pre-linguistic (what Bargeld calls *Semiotische).* There are also his many set gestural demonstrations used at key textual moments; for example, the hands either side of the head for '*Ich*,' acting like quotation marks for the self, the sweeping arm movements 'slicing' down the leg to illustrate '*schicht für schicht'* and the mimed hauling out of the internal organs during *Unvollständigkeit.*

[269] At Minehead's *All Tomorrow's Parties* (2007), this 'playground' was pre-set on a trolley and kept upstage until Neubauten's performance time when it was wheeled downstage for them to mount. This was a practical decision because several other musicians were playing on the same stage but it did underline Neubauten's theatricality. This theatricality has become more pronounced during the *Alles Wieder Offen* tour, especially with the the backcloth, lanterns and inclusion of 'Dave' card improvisations.

Images from *AWO* tour 2008 taken by K Shryane for the author

The group (now all in their late forties/early fifties) still maintain a strong physical approach to creating sound.

Phase Three webcasts consistently provided evidence of this sense of play and offered ample verification of Neubauten's relationship with their materials and the Cageian element of chance and error which is always present in this work.[270] The October 2007 Supporters' DVD*, 3 Jewels,* depicts a set of theatrical rehearsals in the Bunker based on the Dave cards [271] as a way into three short pieces, 'Am I jesus', 'bleib' and 'I kissed Glenn Gould'. The group, all casually dressed apart from Bargeld who wore his usual costume of a black three piece suit,[272] tie and wine red nail varnish, were shown seeking out and trying out a range of unusual objects; they tapped, shook, stroked and scratched sheets of metal, trunks, bins; they played a *Rauschen verboten* sign, recorded a passing aeroplane, blew air on suspended aluminium strips, wrapped a piano's interior, swung, beat and hung their found objects. The

[270] See Chapter 10 which discusses Neubauten's web-streaming.
[271] A chance technique explained in Chapter 6 :4 *The Unintentional.*
[272] Bargeld claims that these suits are 'camouflage' and prevent him from being given a particular social identity (Claire Slerin: *Bizarre,* May 2004, p.115, NBOA sourced 13 February 2007).

busy physicality here was similar to that of any experimental collective in an open-ended rehearsal situation. This playfulness and physical commitment were also present at other (witnessed) rehearsals especially with the partially filled wine glasses played by Rudi Moser for *Musterhaus-Weingeister* (2007). The CD sleeve explanation sums up the childlike pleasure still to be found in researching bodily contact with sonic objects:

> It started as just an idea, perhaps out of a simple wish to drink some wine with friends as a performance, not talking, just ritualised behaviour (Symposium in the original sense?), concentrating on the wine and on the sound. Everything was miked, the table, the glasses, the throats- and we really didn't know where it was taking us. Yes, the wines were good (*Musterhaus* 8, April 2007).

The Wine Glass Set, 02.07 (Photograph taken by author)

Obviously, this current physicalisation is not on the same scale of early Neubauten performances.The assault of Neubauten's music on the musicians

and their audiences has altered (from a sheer weight of physical force to a weightless contemplation) but they have maintained the ideal of the sensitised, awakened dancing body as cited by both Artaud and Nietzsche. Hence, although in a different form, the music does still adhere to the Artaudian intent to irritate the audience through the body's pressure points (Corti, 1970, p.94) as well as 'to heal (my) bruises' (Bargeld/Fadele, NME, 19. September 1987: NBOA sourced 26 November 2006). While Einheit (New Musical Express, 6 April 1985 NBOA sourced 14 February 2007), in the 1980s, wanted the music to be torture, in 2008, it was Artaud's metaphor of the snake charmer which seemed more appropriate: 'treat the audience just like those charmed snakes and bring them back to the subtlest ideas through their anatomies' (Corti, 1970, p.61).

Working in the Bunker 14.02.07 & Floor Piece, Amsterdam 04.04.05 (Photograph taken by author and K.Shryane for author)

Chapter Six: **STRATEGIEN GEGEN die Ecke**

(against the corner)

Squattersonic instrument taken by the author in the Bunker, 14.02.07

As the demarcation between producer and musician disappears, no longer will musicianship be defined by instrumental ability; instead, imagination will be the only limiting force (Broadhurst*:* 1999, p.143).

Introduction

In 1997 (*The Wire,* October 1997, p.77)[273] Chris Bohn posed the question why, in a digital age, did Neubauten still engage in such physical toil when samplers could replicate the tones and timbres the group strove for from beating, bowing, blowing and scraping their sound sources? He finds the answer, not unsurprisingly, in Walter Benjamin's 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' (1936): he quotes, 'Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be' (1997, p. 77). Hence, Bohn argues that the physical presence in a Neubauten performance is all important. It includes missed cues, errors, mechanical failures and risks; so it resists being digitized.

As the previous chapter has discussed the centrality of Neubauten's presence as an anti-body strategy, Bohn's observations (above) provide a suitable bridge from that discussion to the one on their bodily use of found and created noise objects and unconventional sites and procedures. As with the previous chapter, I present the evidence here as part of the group's strategies against the conventional, the deadening sameness of commercial music and the formulaic studio. The group's musical rag-picking of their city links back to the theories of disruption outlined in the Context and links forward to Artaud's ideas for new instruments and hangar sites. The first section considers the relevance of Gutai to Neubauten's relationship with their sound objects, the second points to the roles played by guitars and Einheit in their

[273] Biba Kopf, 'on location' in *The Wire,* October 1997, p. 77

instrumentation, the third analyses some of Neubauten's practice, in particular through the work of Unruh, the fourth considers the application of chance and the final section reviews four diverse sonic landscapes created from Neubauten's relationship with their 'instruments'.

1. Gutai

Many aspects of Neubauten's research into and innovations with found sound, self-made instruments, unconventional sites, and with objects designed for other purposes illustrate Artaud's desire to free performance from the conventional learnt instrument in order to find new sounds 'as high as possible on the open-ended Richter scale' (*Kein Bestandteil sein,* 1987) which will affect the whole anatomy:

> (Musical instruments) will be used as objects, as part of the set. Moreover they need to act deeply and directly on our sensibility through the senses and from the point of view of sound they invite research into utterly unusual sound properties and vibrations which present-day musical instruments do not possess, urging us to use ancient or forgotten instruments or to invent new ones. Apart from music, research is also needed into instruments and appliances based on special refining and new alloys which can reach a new scale in the octave and produce an unbearably piercing sound or noise (1932: Corti, 1970, pp.73-4).

If Neubauten are viewed as researchers, intuitive engineers, makers and manipulators of sound objects rather than primarily as composers, they seem to be working in the tradition of Pierre Schaeffer's concreteness (see Chapter 3). However, there is one vital difference which has already been noted; Schaeffer advocated '*acousmatics'* - what Brandon LaBelle terms 'blind listening' (2006, p.30). In direct contradiction to this aspect of Schaeffer, Neubauten declare the interaction of their bodies with sound objects and encourage their supporters' curiosity about their methods and investigations. The recipient's active witnessing of the encounter is part of listening with pain.

It is this encounter between Neubauten and their objects which links their work to Gutai (more than to Viennese Aktionism suggested by Broadhurst, 1999:15). What marks Gutai art out is its cultivation of physicality between the body and the material object*:*

> Gutai Art does not alter the material. Gutai Art imparts life to the material. Gutai Art does not distort the material. In Gutai Art the human spirit and the material shake hands with each other but keep their distance […]
>
> When the material remains intact and expresses its characteristics, it starts telling a story, and even cries out (Munroe, 1994, p.84). [274]

[274] A.Munroe, *Scream Against the Sky- Japanese Art after 1945,* New York, Guggenheim/Harry N. Abrams, 1994. Gutai literally means concreteness; it came from Osaka as an avant-garde reaction to the imperialistic values perceived as responsible for Japan's war defeat but by the mid 50s it was also about the frustrations of Japan's subservience to American occupation and the eventual casting of Japan as a docile ally in the Cold War struggle; it came to include a reaction against those who, in response to this Americanisation, romanticised the traditional past.

Gutai provided the context for Group Ongaku, a music collective originating from Tokyo University of Fine Arts and Music between 1958 and 1962. LaBelle (2006, pp. 35-45) sets his discussion on Ongaku within an architectural discourse of the body. (This approach has obvious relevance for an analysis of Neubauten, both in terms of their use of their bodies and the architectural concerns within their music.) The performativity of Ongaku, LaBelle argues, is a spatial resistance (Ibid., p. 38) in that it announces itself against given forms and their assigned functions, as in Cage's *Living Room Music* (and, in this context, Neubauten's *Stahlmusik, Faustmusik* and *Anarchitekur).* LaBelle's examples (Jeph Jerman's work with cacti and Akio Suzuki's work with stones) develop his argument that these experiments are not simply about extending musicality but also about negotiations with the real which lead to 'narratives about shaping relationships with the world' (Ibid., p. 41). LaBelle calls this anthropological Surrealism (pp.42-43) (a kind of Situationism) in which avant-garde art taps into everyday life and seeks the unconscious as a source of unexplored action.[275] LaBelle's conclusion (p. 44) also bears striking similarity to Neubauten's aims:

> To hear both the body of sound and the individual body, the sound object and its contextual origin, as an intersection, as a contact and its subsequent noise. The performing body forces itself outwards, exerting against the borders of physicality and against the concrete world, and by extension, the cultural space of music. The exertion stimulates the

[275] Performance as 'spatial resistance' is pivotal to Neubauten's work on many levels as discussed above in Chapter 1 and as demonstrated by their *tapping into* West Berlin as site, instrument and text to provide resistance against the programmed studio forms of popular music. Neubauten's research into the sonic possibilities of almost anything includes investigating the effects of amplification to uncover the hidden vibrational possibilities of cavities, textures, motion and frictions.

found object into sound: agitating the materiality of objects, pressing in against architectural space, through forms of misuse, the built and found collapse in a performative sonics.

.

A statement by Bargeld from *Stimme frißt Feuer* (Berlin, Merve Verlag, 1988) links this form of Situationism:

> Music shouldn't stop with musicianship, we are changing the areas of what is known as music, when there is no limit to what is music, no difference between music sounds and noise, when you can't find anything that isn't an instrument, then a point is reached where there is no analysis. Then, when noise is music, there would be a social progress.[276]

Unruh's metal 'work' bench and spring, Amsterdam, 04.04.05 (Photographs taken by K. Shryane for author)

The nature of the relationship between the musician's body and the sonic object both as an extension of what consitutes a musical instrument and as an evaluation of art's relationship to life, bring to the fore two aspects which

[276] Japan's avant garde art scene seemed to settle for an element of fantastical beauty undisturbed by ghosts of the past or premonitions of an apocalypse (see A. Munroe, *Scream Against the Sky- Japanese Art after 1945,* New York, Guggenheim/Harry N. Abrams, 1994.

although somewhat tangential here, need to be addressed: Neubauten's use of that iconic rock instrument, the guitar, and the role of their former percussionist, F.M. Einheit.

Moser plays drain piping & Unruh a shopping trolley
Amsterdam 04.04. 05 (Photographs taken by K.Shryane for author)

2: Guitars and Einheit

During most of 1980 and the first spontaneous local gigs, Neubauten's line up was both variable and far more traditional, with Bargeld on vocals and guitar, Unruh on drums, and initially Gudrun Gut on synthesiser and Beate Bartel on bass; at other times, Bettina Köster, Chrislo Haas and Alexander Hacke, all using 'real' instruments, were present. The turning point was Unruh's decision to sell his drum kit for rent money in December 1980 and thereafter to construct the group's percussive, wind and stringed instruments from found objects himself. [277] Although Bargeld started with the guitar as a fairly predictable instrument, he has, since those early days, expressed a strong

[277] This is perhaps why Paul Hegarty's main accreditation to Neubauten in his *Noise/Music* (Continuum, 2007, p.123*)* is as 'reconfigur(ing) the shape of the rock band.' He states that, with Test Department and SPK, Neubauten helped to remind us that 'percussion' is an act not just a collective noun (Ibid., p.113). However, Jürgen Teipel (email communication with author 20 October 2005) said that even before Unruh's invented drum kit, Gudrun Gut was experimenting with scrap metal percussion.

dislike for the instrument as a rock cliché, unless it is being manipulated in an unusual way. (Neubauten members often play the guitar horizontally on the floor, bow/pluck it, attach pick-ups or play it with unusual objects like an electric razor or vibrator.) An article in *Guitarist* (Reid, *Devil's Advocate*, August 1997, pp.151-154, NBOA, sourced 26 November 2006) called Bargeld 'the Anti-Guitarist' and cited him as wishing to find a way into guitar playing without playing guitar. Bargeld explains:

> To me playing any instrument is a thinking process […] I'd consider myself to think more like a singer. I come up with an idea for what to play on the guitar due to the value of how much sense it makes in a singing context […] one of the things I've always disliked about playing the guitar are the connotations in reference to masculinity…

Despite the above comment, for nearly two decades, Bargeld did play guitar for Nick Cave, although both musicians have stressed that he always sought to play against the instrument and its ethos. Cave recalled (*Berlin Soundz Decadent,* 2 January 2007) that Bargeld's guitar had two nails instead of machine heads so that it could not be tuned. Bargeld, in the same broadcast, described a home made floor guitar created by Neubauten from a piece of board with two purchased machine heads.

One of Bargeld's two guitars, Berlin, 10.10.06 (Photograph taken by author)

Playing Guitar- Hacke & Bargeld Playing Guitar, Amsterdam & London, 04 & 05. 04 05.
(Photographs taken by K. Shryane for author)

However, Neubauten have consistently used (albeit unconventionally at times) a bass and lead guitar on stage amidst their many other acquired, constructed sound objects, noise experiments and machinery; Hacke and Arbeit are referred to respectively as bass and lead guitarists. This, the group have

explained, is because their rock image produces the money which, in turn, creates the opportunity and time for their sound experimentation.[278]

It is also important to recognise the part played in Neubauten's development by F.M. Einheit who left the group during the recording of *Ende Neu* in 1996. Einheit joined Neubauten from Abwärts in 1981, as a percussionist; most of the percussion on which he played consisted of self-made metal instruments or construction tools. He contributed a great deal to the group's sound and ethos for fifteen years through his very physical on-stage beating of heavy metal and wielding of industrial machinery. Jessamy Calkin confirmed that Einheit's main contribution was his heightened stage presence for he was less interested in the philosophy or ideas of the work (interview with author 15 July 2008). Einheit is quoted by Dax (2005, p.93) as saying that he never built the sound objects but only played them; he was not interested in tinkering but in getting the sound out of the construction.[279] Unruh has explained that while he (Unruh) was responsible for the instrumental constructions, Einheit had the physical commitment and keen involvement in performance to manipulate the materials fearlessly (interview with author 14 February 2007). This, Unruh described as exceptional; however, he also explained that this attitude did result in accidents about which Einheit was unconcerned in a manner not shared by the other members of the group.

[278] Bargeld insists that the group constantly strive to refigure the guitars within the roles of the other non-conventional sound bodies (interview with author 7 November 2005). In a brief interview (no date) on *MySpace*, entitled *Bargeld and Sonic Youth's guitars*, Bargeld states 'I hate guitars;' he continues to explain that this is when they are arranged in rows like jewels and that, for him, guitars are only acceptable as used by Sonic Youth- clapped out, cheap, broken, mistuned and with improvisation (accessed 28 October 2008).
[279] Contact was made on three occasions with Einheit but this never developed.

Einheit. Photograph by A. Dittmer, Berlin (NBOA, sourced 10 October 2006, used with A. Schmid's permission)

3: Interesting Corners and Sites

> For me the tactile element of a sound body or a self-built instrument is always significant […] from the first hour onwards it went in the direction of Arte Povera… Sei schlau, klau beim Bau
>
> ['Be smart, steal from construction (sites)]' (Unruh in Dax, 2005, p.91)

This section focuses Neubauten's practice with their instruments and sites, particularly through the work of Andrew Unruh in his role as the group's 'props-builder' (interview with author, 14 February 2007).

Neubauten have often stressed that during their early years '*Narbengelände diese ganze Gegend, Potsdamer Platz, Anhalter Bahnhof, war unser bevorzugtes.'* ['Scarred terrain, this whole area, Potsdamer Platz and Anhalter Railway station, were our preferred places'] (NBOA article sourced 10-12 October 2006) for here they could find what Unruh has called the corner's

more interesting matters. This fascination with decay was intended to negate the more commercial punk scene while rejecting the economically successful, acquisitive lifestyle of the majority of West Germans. However, it was more than an anti-establishment gesture – it was a lived philosophy (discussed in Chapter 5) which is captured in the words Unruh remembers graffitied on a wall in Eisengrau – 'those who sleep - miss out' (interview with author, 14 February 2007). [280] Although Unruh earned the honour of being called the Cheerful Destructive Character (after Walter Benjamin - Bohn, *The Wire,* April 2000, p.40) he is more rightly Benjamin's heroic Rag-Picker as he 'rescues from complete destruction the broken, the obsolete and the despised, refunctioning them and making them useful once more.' He adds these fragments to his ever-expanding warehouse of potential sonic junk to be explored by the group.[281] He (in Dax, 2005, p.92) explained that 'from early on I had an affinity for metal. It shines so strangely, it's heavier than wood, you can weld it together; it's robust and always sounds different.'

One of Unruh's most enduring finds and adaptations of 'beautiful metal' (interview with author 11 October 2006) began with his chance discovery of a spring inside an abandoned taxi cab partition. These partitions were put into cabs to divide the driver from the passenger after a spate of murders of cab drivers in West Berlin in the eighties. However, the cabbies disliked them and

[280] Maeck commented: '*das einzige, was dich wach halt, ist Neugier'* (1982, p.108-9); also see above Wolkenstein's comment on 'no future' Chapter 1:2.

[281] Gilloch, from whose critique (1996, pp.165-6) these quotations are taken, argues that for Benjamin, the Rag-Picker was heroic because s/he was a model for redemptive practice and an allegory for the work of the historian in the sense that s/he was concerned with the salvation of objects and people from the oblivion of forgetting. Hence, their activities resist the fragmentation of experience in the urban complex and the growth of modern amnesia; the rag-picker 'excavates and remembers' - e.g. the cabbie murders.

discarded them on the streets. Unruh extracted from one of these rejected cab interiors a bass tension spring, 80 cm by 2cm thick which when made taut, stretched on an iron frame and amplified, could sound like a bass drum; it remains a key aspect of the group's instrumentation. A vibrator was another 'find' which has also become a permanent fixture in the sound bank. Unruh explained that it is useful for making guitar strings resonate and for creating 'an insect flying over your head noise' (Ibid., p. 93). It forms part of *Armenia*'s memorable opening. With a big hanging steel spring attached to the off-balance motor, the vibrator also provided the opening of *Die genaue Zeit*; according to Unruh, the object has since frequently been used musically by other groups. Another unusual sound invention of Unruh's is the Aircake which, with its wedding cake layers of plastic cut-off bottles and tins, visually sums up the group's ragpicking sonic art. As it rotates on a turntable Unruh blows pressurised air into the cut-off containers. However, it is not just music which it produces but, as with other Unruh inventions, the Aircake is placed on stage prior to its use, like a Duchamp readymade or a Beuysian social sculpture and can be viewed as such as well as listened to and watched in performance.

Aircake, image from author's *Perpetuum Mobile* cover 2004, with permission to use

Unruh playing a survival blanket, Amsterdam 04.04.05 (Photograph taken by K. Shryane for author) Unruh with plastic containers, Glasgow 25.04.07 (Photograph taken by author)

Unruh playing aircake & Bargeld playing a radio, Amsterdam, 04.04.05 (Photographs taken by K. Shryane for author)

Much of Unruh's work involves constantly testing out the sound properties of objects; there are various video clips which depict him in his former backyard, which is piled high with potential scrap, where he treats the viewer to an enthusiastic guided tour.

For example, in October 2006, at the Bunkersaal, I witnessed Unruh's investigations into the arrangement of various pieces of piping.

Sonic creations at the Berlin Bunker, 10.06 (Photograph taken by author)

He explained that each pipe had its own unique sound quality, depending on its length, thickness, diameter, shape, metal type and of course, what was then used to make contact with it or through it. He extended these possibilities further by layering the pipes criss-cross over each other. Unruh's patient and dedicated research echoed the work of Harry Partch and, of course, Cage and his contemporaries, as well as acknowledging the demands of the Futurists and Artaud for new musical instruments more appropriate to the industrial age. Further evidence of Unruh's work can be seen in his solo webcast from Phase Two, *Airshow* (reworked for DVD, 2008 – see Chapter 10:2b). Here he demonstrated several, meticulous experiments with the sound of air, using a variety of objects which included a balloon, air compressor, blow torch and propeller. These resulted in a fluid, transmuting orchestra of air noises which hissed, vibrated, roared, rumbled, burped and whined. Unruh's initiating and conducting of the general public in the use of his improvised drum tables at

various European locations offers yet another example of his social investigations into sound. [282]

Andrew Unruh leading one of his drum table sessions, 2008, Berlin (hendrik@studio93: given to author by Unruh with permission to use)

Unruh's drum tables were also a feature of *Grundstück* (the supporters' concert at the Palast der Republik, 4 November 2004 – Chapter 10), where they were played by 550 supporters. For this event the group created two amplified-steel, vibrating tables layered with pulsating polystyrene chips; the resulting muffled uptempo beat greeted the supporters as they arrived for the concert on the ground floor. Once they had ascended the stairs to the first floor the sound source was visible; the bouncing polystyrene chips were fully in view and touchable. Such playfulness set the mood for the supporters'

[282] Shortly after this interview Unruh performed at the Volksbühne in *Berlin Insane* (October 2006) using his drum tables as an inclusive musical act as he had at Grundstück. A similar event took place at Tacheles in February 2008. Unruh sees this work as social art in that everyone becomes a musician; this, he states, is one of his primary aims for his work in music (also see Chapter 10).

evening which also used the ‘found sound’ of 100 supporter voices, the steel girders and horizontal supports and staircases of the building as well as Unruh’s 50 drum tables.

Waiting for use- polystyrene & vibrating tables, Palast der Republik, 11.04
(Photographs taken by author)

Although Neubauten have now supplanted fire on stage (as a visual act and a sonic device) with air (see Unruh’s *Airshow* above), fire remains a key leitmotif associated with the group and one frequently referred to in this study. It was Unruh who foregrounded its use in Neubauten performances and Bargeld who made frequent and extensive comments on his youthful fascination with fire: ‘Ever since our first studio we tried to capture the sound of burning fire and record it with a microphone. You could say that we actually wanted to play with fire like you’d play with a guitar’ (in Dax, 2005, p.7).

Neubauten have always acknowledged the link with Artaud’s and Cioran’s celebration of fire and its apocalyptic connotations, but they have never suggested any overtly political intent as, for example, the RAF’s anti-Vietnam

call to bring fire to the streets of West Germany.[283] It was more that, as with other found-sound and effects, fire was readily available on the building and squatted sites and barricades. It was also an essential part of Neubauten's youth; most apartments had solid fuel heating, and, of course, fire could be an insensitive, rebellious provocation to parents who had experienced the apocalyptic landscape of defeated Berlin. Hence, in many ways, it was Kreuzberg -Schöneberg's recent past and its present ruined and abandoned urbanity which made fire available and attractive as an on-stage activity. Although many myths developed about burnt stages and props destroyed by Molotov cocktails and blow torches (Maeck, 1996, p.68), Bargeld insists that there was never any attempt to cause injury (Ibid.). Jessamy Calkin recalled (interview with author 15 July 2008) only one serious incident concerning fire in America, when the concert was terminated by worried officials; similarly Maeck talks about Neubauten's 'precise efficiency' on stage (1996, p.64). [284]

[283] Bargeld has said that he and Unruh, as teenagers, were politically involved and he has mentioned early links with Baader Meinhof and with Ensslin's son (interview with author 5 November 2004). Both left wing politics and incendiary activities have been cited separately as the cause of his expulsion from school. Bargeld has been frequently quoted saying that America, as a nation has the deepest fear of fire (Sharp, *The Wire,* February 1998, NBOA, sourced 10 October 2006). The late 70s Bristol group, the Pop Group also expressed a similar fascination with fire as an intense deconditioning process; there were similar references to internal combustion 'our creating music is the result of acute internal pressure' (Reynolds, 2005*,* p.76) and fire figured in the lyrics as an ideal state of being, referencing Artaud and the Promethean myth as exalted quests for the unknown. Killing Joke also used fire on stage and textually (see Chapter 9, introduction).

[284] Bargeld took part in an installation work entitled *233 degrees Celsius* in Podewil, Berlin in 1997 with Kain Karawahn, a Berlin based fire artist, and Dr. Maria Zinfert. They requested unwanted books from libraries, shops and individuals and were given an incredible 7,000 'rejects'- with which they built a pyramid in Podewil. On 30 May 1997 this was then lit it as a one-off installation activity. Half-burnt pages were randomly extracted to video onto screens and photograph giving a new *after*life to the unwanted and destroyed object and the selected 'saved' textual fragments were read by Bargeld to the public. These disjointed texts were then printed enface with the photographed images of burning pages- as interim books. The fragmented images present what is missing leaving the reader to supplement ideas, if so desired, both into the photograph and into the scraps of texts. The book edition of this event contains writings by Bargeld on his interest in fire.

One of Neubauten's most fascinating sound architectures was created in 1994 for Werner Schwab's *Faust, meine Brustkorb, mein Helm* directed by Thomas Thieme (after Schwab's sudden death). Here Unruh strove to create 'wooden' library music instead of the more familiar metal, concrete or fire-induced sounds. The stage set consisted of several areas to signify Faust's study which changed with the destruction of the study material. This disintegration was illustrated by an onstage conveyor belt constructed by Unruh which mixed wood, paper and water to a pulp and pressed it into briquettes. Unruh built a book tearing machine (the Orchestrion) which consisted of 8 different sections; it included a fan which made the pages flutter, a book catapult on top and a centrifuge. There were big folios which were used as bass drums and various sizes of books hollowed out and struck by oversized clappers. Tables with their tops sawed out in tongue shapes were used as percussion instruments and some tables were strung to create bass chords.

The concept being explored was not of music composed for the theatre but music as produced from the physical effects of the theatre itself; Schwab's unplayable stage directions were played as music and hence, as *'szenischen Musik'* which '*musikalisch bespielbare Installation verwandelt* ('transformed (the stage) into a musical playable installation' (Dieter Kranz, Frankfurter Rundschau: *Aus dem Nachlass,* 2 November 1994).[285]

[285] Unruh detailed the lengthy research on motor performances and electromagnets as well as constructing these sound bodies. He explained that although Schwab had been a close friend of Einheit and Bargeld, and the script had been especially created by him for Neubauten, there were no guidelines or directions within the text. Bargeld, for whom the role of Mephisto was written, suggested some ideas but otherwise, Unruh could claim complete ownership of this work. He cited himself as a 'props-maker' during this interview (14 February

Bargeld said:

> It was clear from the beginning, that for this piece nobody could have appeared on stage with just a guitar. We needed an especially designed instrumentarium, a stage set to be played as an instrument….a wooden music…Research work: how can you outwit the music in tables and books? How do you make music with the music in tables and books? Einstürzende Neubauten in the laboratory of Faust. Bookdrums, hollow books, knocking, old volumes. Tables, manipulated tables, different tables strung with strings or wires, sawn out tables, kalimba tables, moving tables. Book-machines, pageturningmachines, a motorised book-hi-hat, a whole orchestrion put together out of different book machines (Maeck, 1996, p.128).

It is possible to cite numerous other inventions and unusual applications of sound over the years by Neubauten; the following offer a representative example. The studio became a Gulf War site strewn with sand, rubble, fire and oil for *Wüste* (1991). Burning oil was dripped past a microphone to create a distinctive whooshing sound and a tape loop was made of Einheit emptying a 50 kilo sack of sand. *Der Leere Raum* (1994-5) was created from a treated recording of each member of the group entering the empty space of the East Berlin Academy of Arts and responding to some questions; similarly *Abwesenheit* (1999) evolved from the interference created by the musicians' mobile phones which were left on during recording. For *Helium* (1998), which

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2007) and detailed examples of solo work for other directors which engaged his skills in creating and manipulating often oversized and flown sonic objects.

is one of a trilogy of pieces about the sun, Bargeld inhaled helium to give a surreally high pitch to his voice. *Beauty* (2000) includes the use of silk and polystyrene while *Dead Friends* (2004) lists swinging microphones. The horn/siren sound, a twentieth century scream-motif of disaster and loneliness (prevalent in the work of 'classical' experimentalists, in particular, Varese) is one of the most distinctive noises used by Neubauten. The sound is created by Alexander Hacke blowing down a length of bent drain pipe. It has an eerie, haunting melancholy and has become one of Neubauten's signature noises. Unruh's Nudel, an amplified wire strung between two poles emits a fragile tremor which seems to be barely alive requiring acute listening is another signature sound of the group.

Polystyrene at Glasgow, 25.04.07 (Photograph taken by author)

Falling Metal at Porto 03.05.08 (Photographs taken by author)

Further examples of Neubauten's diverse sonic sources (electric drills, jet turbine engine, a shopping trolley, long flexible plastic pipes, a survival blanket, dried linden leaves, a bag of polystyrene chips, a tray of aluminium sticks, a bundle of empty canisters…) can be found in the sleeve notes of their various recordings as well as seen in use in performance.

Boris Wilsdorf in the Bunker, 10.06 (Photograph taken by author)

The eight *Musterhaus* works (2005-07) introduced a selection of new objects and experiments including field recordings and samples from past years; these incorporated a guitar played in a cellar under a cellar, below sea level in Hamburg's port area (eventually used in *Susej,* 2007), answer-phone cut-ups and the decanting, pouring, sampling, swilling and swallowing of wine.

The acoustic space has, for many experimental musicians, become a key player in music's extension, from Stockhausen's *Gruppen* (1955-7) and *Carré* (1959-60) to Kirkegaard's *Four Rooms- Chernobyl* (2006) and Sigur Ros' *Heima* (2007). For Neubauten playing unusual sites has provided an opportunity to explore and experiment with a place's sound potential. Two key examples – the autobahnbrücke cavity (Context Prologue) and the Palast der Republik (Chapter 10) are dealt with elsewhere; other locations have included a secret location in the Mohave Desert to which spectators were bused (Maeck offers evocative detail of this event, 1996, pp.68-69) and the Goldene Saal at the Nuremberg Rally grounds, where the Press interpreted the concert as a kind of anarchists' exorcism which could give the historically-burdened place a new meaning (Bargeld in Dax, 2005, p.132). Klaus Maeck (Ibid.) has stated that Neubauten were always a band who needed special locations: 'Because that's part of their basic philosophy, to make music out of everything. It's not just about the instrumentation; it's also about the space which is used in the performance.'

Neubauten have played on and with an unused part of the autobahn in Tempelhof-Dreieck with oil drums of fire and tar machines, a flatbed truck in

JR Rowe's junkyard in Denver, the ruins of Tokyo's Nakamatsu Ironworks, the roof of the Fiat Lingotto plant in Torino, the MS Mercuur in the port of Amsterdam with Lang's *Metropolis* projected onto its hull for a quay-side audience, a squat building in Copenhagen, the German pavilion of Expo 86 in Vancouver, the specially constructed moving glass capsule in Vienna for *Der Auge des Taifun* (see Chapter 9:2*)* and in the Krems Minoritenkirche. Although much of Neubauten's performance work has also taken place in rock venues, festival spaces and arts centres, their use of unconventional sites is important as it stems from their initial involvement in barricade/squatter music and their seeking out of abject landscapes in West Berlin. This reiterates their desire (not always fulfilled) to deconstruct the rock concert which reached fruition in 2004 with *Grundstück,* not only in terms of the playing and listening to the degutted building but also in its arena configuration.

The Krems Minoritenkirche, in Austria
(www.fromthearchives.com/en/chronology3)

4: The Unintentional

> Be surprised and be surprising
>
> (Bargeld, *Jewels*, Potomak, 2008)

Neubauten's work has always contained the unintentional as a result of their use of objet trouvè and non-conventional venues. This section considers this and their further embracing of this Cageian ideal with a card-based technique. In the early eighties their recycling of objects as instruments found near the venue to be played, gave their concerts an improvisational and individual aura and meant that the music could never become stagnant or unsurprising. Katherine Blake of Miranda Sex Garden (BBC Radio 2, *Berlin Soundz Decadent:* 2 January 2007) confirmed the resulting excitement and risk involved in this uncertainty for the musicians and their audience, as each gig was different and volatile because of the changing 'industrial playground' nightly created by the group. Unruh explained:

> We just went to the junk yard. FM Einheit and I did that a lot, especially on tour. We couldn't take more than two Zarges aluminium shipping cases full of selected equipment to America because of weight. Anything bigger had to be found on location. That way, we had to improvise. By doing so, we came up with new songs, too (in Dax, 2005, p.91).

One example of recent open-ended experimentation which I witnessed was during a *Musterhaus* rehearsal for *Weingeister* in the Bunker-saal on 16 February 2007. Ten different sizes of wine glasses with varying volumes of

red, rosè, white, still and carbonated wine were amplified and played; Alka Seltzer tablets were added and the fizz recorded, over-dubbed, manipulated and played backwards. During the two hours I was present, I was constantly aware of the playful (Gutai) respect afforded to the objects and the openness to the outcomes. The design of two tables set up in the Bunker was visually pleasing. One table was created from a thin quivering metal sheet. The work had a detailed, theatrical quality, especially in Rudi Moser's painstakingly meticulous contact with the glass rims in order to discover the potential of their music. The sound which emerged was delicate, fine and chilling; Bargeld described it as a 'film score'.

The second technique referred to above involves the use of what the group call 'Dave' cards. These were recently used for the creation of the *Jewels* which originated as monthly downloads for the supporters (they were described by Bargeld as 'two/three minute miniatures' Potomak, 2008). Bargeld explains the approach as a 'navigation system not a strategic system' (*3 Jewels*, October 2007). The Dave cards are 650 small cards, kept in a cigar box; they consist of nouns, adjectives or brief phrases. Created by Bargeld, they are based on aspects of Neubauten's history and work under the titles, Strategies, Players, Instruments and Works; for example, *hin und her, in einem Zug, entfernen, liebe, langsam, flach, ein kleines Ding, ein Traum, stampfen, am Anfang*. ['Here and there, in a train, remove, love, slow, flat, a small thing, a dream, stamp, at the start'.] Bargeld expressed the group's aim with the cards as seeing how far they could reinvestigate past experiences to uncover accidents or hidden truths. He has called the process 'Andrè Breton

avec J.C. to the power of EN' (Potomak, 2008).[286] There are no rules other than the commitment individually to create a sound piece, in about two days, from the four selected cards each musician has individually drawn. Cards can be rejected and alternatives chosen if necessary. It is possible that the cards selected for one session could all relate to one former work, but Bargeld points out that a new work would still evolve.[287] Once the words have been drawn, each musician gets to work, building, testing and playing, at the same time knowing that eventually the separate pieces will be meshed into one work. This technique echoes Grotowski's Acting Propositions in which individual improvisations to a given stimulus (e.g. the actor's memory of a childhood song) are eventually blended into a whole performance. Bargeld explained that the process requires abstract thinking and leaps of imagination; it is designed to be illogical and to create the freedom to use dream protocol. Webcasts often included Dave work; for example during a February 2007 session, in response to their selected cards, Unruh worked with a hammer, metal sheeting and a large rivet; Arbeit had laid a guitar horizontal while allowing a suspended, amplified disco lamp to move within its own momentum above it creating feedback; Moser worked with an oversized kettle drum and Hacke manipulated the emerging sounds on a laptop while Bargeld blended his selected cards into a surreal dream text.

[286] Brian Eno has had a similar system since 1975 called *Oblique Strategies* initially designed to help break down any creative stalemate. Several other musicians, from John Cage to John Zorn, have used 'game' strategies as performance techniques.
[287] The *Jewels* album booklet, 2008, details all the chosen cards for the 15 pieces on the album and helps to clarify some of the leaps of imagination involved in playing fruit, dragonflies, Dostojewsky, Magyar Energia and Glenn Gould. During the *Alles Wieder Offen* 2008 Tour, the musicians sometimes attempted an instant Dave experiment for the audience.

Dave Cards, 14.02.07 (Photograph taken by author)

These two examples (*Weingeister* and the Dave cards) offer evidence that during 2007-2008 the aim to find new unexpected sounds and different ways of treating these through chance methods remains unchanged, even if the group's physicality is of a different kind. [288] Neubauten still declare their sound source and method (although not in their former direct, on-stage language of the construction site and machine) for during the webcasts the group continued to enjoy and maintain a commitment to making known the what and the how for their audience. The web-streamings were always accompanied by a forum and chatroom which facilitated this openness. The demonstration sessions by individual group members also aided this transparency. (The webcasts and the Supporter Initiative are discussed in Chapter 10.)

[288] However, Bargeld has commented, a little bitterly, that some followers still seemed to expect the forty-something year old musicians to be leaping over tall fences to steal from building sites (interview with author 7 November 2005).

Paschke checks the experiments with free-falling metal strips from a suspended sheet, 13.02.07 (Photograph taken by author)

4: Four Sonic Landscapes

In this chapter I have discussed Neubauten's non-conformist approach to creating sound. The group's primary aim was to render listening painful (*'Hör mit Schmerz'* Maeck, 1996) and difficult (as already mentioned in Chapter 3). Their first album, *Kollaps* was intended to be unlistenable with its deliberate denial of a rock format (verse, chorus, guitar backing), its freeform chaotic noise and visceral ferocity in which nothing is given priority over anything else. Bargeld's distinctive voice which can range from scream to enunciation provides a further layer to this and is discussed in the following chapter.

I conclude this chapter with a brief overview of four very different albums which resulted from the approaches to sound research and organisation discussed above but first it is important to point out that each of Neubauten's major albums presents a distinctive sound and atmosphere (often the result of the current materials being used for instrumentation and the particular engagement with Bargeld's voice). Thus each is a *Gesamtkunstwerk*; for

example, *Fünf auf der nach oben offenen richterskala* is slow, restrained, edgy and tauntingly unexpected in view of its title; *Haus der Lüge* is unrelenting in its anger, energy and furious onslaught. These two albums respectively 1987 and 1989, are sonically very different and are not easy listening. The four works chosen to conclude this chapter include one created for a stage play, another for a television documentary, the second major album and a limited edition posted to supporters only. These are the already mentioned *Faustmusik* (1996) with its interiorized, confined sonics, the external, expansive soundscape composed for Hubertus Siegert's television documentary on Berlin's building programme, *Berlin Babylon* (2000) and two other works which are separated by 20 years, *Zeichnungen des Patienten OT* (1983) and *Supporter Album#1* (2003). What unifies all this work is the visual, three-dimensional quality of each composition.

Faustmusik, as library music, consists of muffled, muted, internal sounds dominated by paper, wood and wind, within a small, confined space. *Tische* ['table'] is a three minute drone of a humming machine interwoven with rustling of papers while *Besetzt's* ['full'] muffled wood and metal beats are interspersed with sparkings, fuzzy rustles and choric voices comprised of phonetic sounds. *Das Orchestrion* suggests a roomful of machinery all slightly out of synchronisation. Here papers rustle, doors slam and muffled thuds conjure up wading, then stamping, through thick piles of papers. In a clear contrast, *Berlin Babylon's* noise is expansive. Its title track consists of swirling, uncoordinated sounds sliced through with the rhythmic heavy pound of earth moving machinery, the clang of metal, the clash of steel and the hum of

scaffolding. Busy helicopters and walkie-talkies contrast with the delicate high pitched vibrations of *Glas 1 Sony-Center* (the huge glass-fronted skyscraper which dominates the new Potsdamer Platz). The sound rises ethereally through amplified resonating wires and the shrill, intermittent tremor and tap of thin metal on metal. Together with its companion piece *Glas 2 (Richtfest),* it offers a balance to the predominance of heavy pounding sounds, surging movements and the recurring motif, a circular noise which seems wearily to be going nowhere. There are two provocative references to Germany's past in the work, which in their weightiness balance the light *Glas* works*;* first is one minute of a 1934 recording of Beethoven's Symphony No 3, Opus 55, *Trauermarsch* which is drowned out by the sound of falling rubble; secondly, and most memorably, Angela Winkler gives a storm-encrusted, wind-swept recitation of Benjamin's *Angel of History.* Wind rushes across open space, through cracks and ruins to attack her voice and to remind us of the former desolation of Potsdamer Platz. As the wind rises and moves forward, it brings the sounds of debris, falling glass and structures which submerge the language in a swirling chaos. *Godzilla in Mitte* (an amusing reference to Japan's atomic American beast let loose in the former East Berlin's centre) and *Architekur ist Geiselnahme*, a title and an idea which not only dates back to the early 80s but perhaps to the troubles of the 1960s-70s, provide two more recent historical links. The album concludes with the seminal song, *Die Befindlichkeit des Landes* which is discussed in Chapter 9 (4d. *Bird's- Eyed Music and the new Berlin*).[289]

[289] The sounds are best listened to with the melancholic visual images which dip, swing, sweep, rush and linger over building sites. Siegert intended his images to focus the frenetic activity to cover over the old-new Berlin: he comments that for him, the countless building

Zeichnungen des Patienten O.T creates a lonely world out of joint; a primeval one without buildings, subterranean and filled with heavy, dark sounds of bubbling mud, smouldering fires and blundering, groaning beasts, all constantly under the threat of being sucked into a swirling vortex or smothered by the pounding muffled beat. The horn (Hacke's length of drain pipe see above Section 3) is introduced as an unnerving, animalistic call for contact and Unruh's 'found' vibrator provides the fragile drone opening of both *Armenia* and *Die genaue Zeit.* Fragments of extraneous noise are included: a child humming and chattering snippets of broadcasts, a looped police help line concerning a kidnapping, smashing glass, a howling dog, a finger click against a tooth, the sampling of an Armenian folksong and water dripping on a hot stove. These shards ebb and flow in the sound frame and are frequently cut through by icy sounds of falling metal (*Vanadium-i-ching)* and by Bargeld's extreme, ever-surprising voice which often is hardly articulated or appears strangled by weight. Despite these complex, ponderous textures, there is a sense of urgency in the work – of time running out. [290]

The obvious binary of this raw heaviness and submersion is the light, air-filled space-scape of *Perpetuum Mobile* with its perpetual, cyclical journeys and thoughtful birds; however, I have selected the slightly earlier supporter version

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sites seem to be 'like a memory of utopian promises' www.berlinbabylon.de accessed 30.09.04.

[290] Although the title *O.T.* refers to Oswald Tschirtner, a hospitalised schizophrenic Austrian artist, whose reductive drawings captured the essence of his subjects with unnerving clarity, this does not imply that the music is centred on any Laing praxis of the impossibility of defining sanity but more the Dubuffetian concept of Tschirtner's provoking, minimalist outsider art.

because it contains some rarer pieces such as *X* and *Insomnia*.[291] Air compressors, the aircake, linden leaves, plastic tubes, polystyrene cubes, amplified wires, an electric fan, stringed instruments and a playful, distant lilt to Bargeld's voice give the work a different kind of beauty which however, is never comforting or reassuring for it is streaked through with failure, loss and irony. Irony is present in Bargeld's rhythmic sprechgesang and the muted metal percussion, especially in *X* and *Insomni*a, while the sense of failure and loss is found in the disconnected strands of songs like the multi-layered, fragile *Ein seltener Vogel* with its bells, humming voices, springs, plastic and mantras. Although these works are not demonstratively painful to hear, they are still unsettling; for example, in the misleadingly gentle *Compressors in the dark* with its dada word lists, which dissolve into animalistic squeals, squeaks and gurgles.

The group's attention to detail remains consistent across this diverse oeuvre, as does their lengthy research, preparation and their belief in music's little steps toward some kind of socially inclusive utopia. At an attended rehearsal/webcast in February 2007, Neubauten repeatedly investigated a sequence for a Jewel called *Die Ebenen werden nicht vermischt* ['the levels will not be mixed'] which involved Bargeld releasing a rope attached to a suspended metal sheet in order to scatter scores of aluminium bars around his feet; these he kicked, rolled, shuffled as he intoned his text. The webcast ran 40 minutes over schedule as the group struggled with the detail of this sequence. This attention to detail and the pleasure found in investigation,

[291] Neubauten's journey toward bird's-eyed landscapes began with *Silence is Sexy* which celebrates the Total Eclipse when the birds became ominously silent.

what Nick Cave (Bohn/ Kopf, *The Wire,* April 2000, p.38) called Neubauten's 'steadfast lack of compromise (and) a genuine love of their medium,' are also found in Bargeld's solo work which far from being of a different quality or concern, constantly informs and extends the work of the group. For example, a video clip of the Buenos Aires' *Vollstreckung Kostbarer Erinnerung* ['Execution of Precious Memories'], (Maeck, 1995, NBOA unpublished copy) [292] shows Bargeld at play with sound objects. He sits at two trays of gravel which have contact microphones and carefully swirls, grabs, drops, rubs and shakes the gravel, listening and reacting intently to his own rhythm, as well as his cues (for he is overlaying and interposing with the voices of his Buenos Aires' actors). The clouds of dust created from this interaction of body and material surround his fellow performers and their scripts; their bemusement appears to add to Bargeld's pleasure. Cave's comment quoted above, continues with the observation that the group have achieved 'a sound that is first authentic and utterly their own' (Bohn, *The Wire,* 2000). This appraisal also owes much to the group's use of voice which has developed with Bargeld's diverse (and distinctive) vocal methods pitted at first against the metal and debris, then later, working against metaphor or narrative to produce a dense, often theatrical rendering. Hence, the next section discusses these vocal approaches as strategies against the conventional use of the voice.

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[292] Bargeld began these performance sequences in Berlin in 1994 sponsored by the Goethe Institute. *Execution of Precious Memories* has taken place in Berlin, Tokyo, Stockholm, Yaoundé/Cameroun, London, New Delhi, Beunos Aires, Cracow, and more recently in San Francisco. At the locale of the performance site people are asked to complete a questionnaire on their memories (sometimes this accompanies the advanced purchased ticket for the event). Some are selected and processed into a poetic/theatrical libretto by Bargeld and local performers using the local language, theatre, dance and music into a performative exploration of the idea that memory is rewritten as much as history is, as suggested by Chris Marker in *Sans Soleil* (*New Musical Express*, 6 April 1985, NBOA sourced 14 February 2007).

Unruh and Bargeld, *AWO* tour London 22.05.08 (Photographs taken by K Shryane for author)

Chapter Seven: **STRATEGIEN GEGEN die Stimme**

[against the voice]

Der Mund ist die Wunde des Alphabets...

my screams turn back to lick the wound...

(Bargeld*, Stimme frißt Feuer*, 1988)

Blixa Bargeld, Brussels & Porto 21 & 03.05.08 (Photographs taken by K Shryane for author)

Introduction (Artaud again)

Clamour not yet pacified into words

(Derrida on Artaud, 1978, p.240)

The third *gegen* strategy after those 'collapsing' the performing body and musical instrumentation in the two previous chapters, is Neubauten's de(con)struction of the voice. In this chapter I argue that their vocal anti-strategies reflect other influential oral experiments made by a range of artists from Kurt Schwitters to Cathy Berberian and Henri Chopin, as well as contributing to the treated voice work used by musicians such as Stockhausen, Oliveros and Reich. Such artists as these have helped to extend the performative voice beyond the symbolic code (which, in isolation,

Julia Kristeva described as 'fetished and static') to include the semiotic code (described by Kristeva as 'woven of drive energy' in Lechte, 1989, p.28).[293] The explanation for much of this vocal exploration is again to be found in Artaud's *The Theatre and its Double* (1936). Writing about the changes he wished to make to spoken language on the stage, Artaud (Corti, 1970, p.35) observed:

> To make metaphysics out of spoken language is to make language convey what it does not normally convey. That is to use it in a new, exceptional and unusual way, to give it its full, physical shock potential, to split it up and distribute it actively in space, to treat inflexions in a completely tangible manner and restore their shattering power and really to manifest something; to turn against language and its basely utilitarian, one might almost say alimentary, sources, against its origins as a hunted beast, and finally to consider language in the form of Incantation.

Hence, the centrality of Artaud in Neubauten's performance approaches continues with the voice, for his advocation of a 'genuine physical language, no longer based on words but on signs, shouts and rhythms' (Ibid., p.83) is

[293] John Lechte in J. Fletcher, & A. Benjamin, *Abjection, Melancholy and Love, the work of Julia Kristeva*, Warwick, Warwick Studies, 1989. Kristeva believed that worthy avant-garde art contained both semiotic and symbolic codes; such a balance is achieved by both trained and untrained singers as diverse as Diamanda Galas, Arto Lindsay, Phil Minton, Mike Patton, Damo Suzuki, Keiji Haino, Mizutani Takashi and Yamatako Eye whose various vocalisings provide a contemporary context for Neubauten's own usage of these two codes.

part of the twentieth century's interest in non-Western musical styles of which Neubauten are a part.[294]

Such pre-linguistic cries, gestures and sounds were encouraged by early experimenters such as Henry Cowell and Harry Partch and later made more widely known through the work of Steve Reich and Philip Glass. Trained artists like Cathy Berberian (mentioned above), Meredith Monk and Jocelyn Pook worked at extending singing beyond the manicured Euro-centric voice to include non-linguistic syllables, musical onomatopoeia and untexted vocalisation (similar to those found in Middle Eastern and Asian cultures). Iannis Xenakis (see Chapter 3:1 *Sound Organisers*) also used both male and female voices as instrumentation with and against his radical orchestrations. His use of language freed from semantics 'where phonology is everything' (Matossian, 1998)[295] on works such as *Nuits* (1967), *A Colone* (1977) and *Knephas* (1990) provide excellent examples of this; here Xenakis interweaves disjointed bits of words, bursts of keening, vowels, hisses, whispers, shrill cries and chants to express the unspeakable.

The above-mentioned 'non-Western' delivery is an important aspect. Artaud (Corti, 1970, pp.69-70) wanted his vocalisations to be capable of conveying far more than moral passions or psychological problems – he wanted it, as Xenakis required, capable of conveying the unspeakable. He described this,

[294]Artaud was influenced by the vocal delivery of the Balinese Theatre which he experienced in Paris, 1931 and preferred to the dominant psychological performance language of the contemporary French stage.
[295] Hyperion's collection and sleeve notes by Nouritza Matossian, New London Chamber Choir with James Wood, 1998.

his new tangible, objective theatre language, as ‘a truly Oriental concept of expression:’

> Abandoning our Western ideas of speech, it turns words into incantation. It expands the voice. It uses vocal vibrations and qualities, wildly trampling them underfoot. It pile-drives sounds. It aims to exalt, to benumb, to bewitch, to arrest our sensibility. It liberates a new lyricism of gestures which because it is distilled and spatially amplified, ends by surpassing the lyricism of words. Finally it breaks away from language’s intellectual subjugation by conveying the sense of a new, deeper intellectualism hidden under these gestures and signs and raised to the dignity of special exorcisms.

Bargeld’s use of the voice often suggests a quasi-religious or Eastern quality in his intoning and use of incantation. There are similarities with the androgynous voice of Nico (Christa Päffgen -the German singer-song-writer associated with Warhol, the Velvet Underground, in particular, John Cale). Both performers’ voices suggest a timeless/placeless range which encompasses what sounds like the Gregorian chant, Schubertian lied, Brecht’s Epic Theatre and Indian-Middle Eastern song. Bargeld also employs the Artaudian (and Xenakis’) desire for a language which exceeds information and meaning; ‘somewhere between gesture and thought […] a spatial language’ (Corti, 1970, pp.68-69) in his use of non-phonemes and screams - discussed in this and the following chapter. A final direct reference to Artaud’s influence is found in his desire that this new performance language should be in the form of ‘(g)iving words approximately the importance they have in

dreams' (Ibid., p.72). In their frequent use of *Träumetexte* material, Bargeld says Neubauten aim 'to break logical strategies' (*3 Jewels*, 2007); he emulates Heiner Müller's use of dream material in the belief that its subconscious roots may have more authenticity. This is further referred to in Chapter 9 regarding the structuring of Neubauten texts.

Another strand in the reformation and expansion of the catalogue of singing styles (which paralleled to some extent Russolo's attempts to expand the traditional orchestra for the industrial age) is found in those predominantly self-taught *geniale dilletanten* who deliberately ignored the prescriptions of 'good' singing by creating their own distinctive vocal styles that reflected the realities of their lives (e.g. Leadbelly, Woody Guthrie, Billie Holliday, Roscoe Holcomb and Robert Johnson).[296] All these aspects (with Artaud's directives) have created a context for Neubauten's untrained experiments with the voice.

Steven Connor's *The Decomposing Voice of PostModern Music*,[297] clarifies and contextualises many of these developments in both acoustic and treated vocal work. His opening discussion of popular music's increasing centralisation of the voice in an instrumental frame is of particular interest. Here the voice, freed from noise and the material of the body through the power of the microphone and the studio, has become an easily accessible commodity for the mass market; this is in sharp contrast with Neubauten's vocal strategies. Connor's (2001, pp.478-9) focus on Luciano Berio's

[296] Another relatively unacknowledged aspect of this is the work of Cecil Sharp and Vaughan Williams in the early twentieth century in collecting and celebrating, as an artform, the untrained singing voice of the traditional English song.
[297] Connor in *New Literary History,* vol. 32, 3, John Hopkins University Press, Summer 2001 pp.467-483, http//muse.jhu.edu accessed 02.02.06.

exploration of the 'broken up' voice with Cathy Berberian (in particular, *Sequenza 111,* 1965*)* and Steve Reich's *Come out to show them* (1966) is also relevant for this study, not least because of his interpretations of the works. He cites Berio's description of Berberian's extreme vocalisations as seeking out the 'ugly, indeterminate kind of waste- a bitumen' (similar to Kristeva's *geno-text*- see below) and he describes Reich's piece as a thickening sonic swirl and 'rubble of endogenous noise' which nevertheless 'gathers a kind of unsuspecting music.' Such language resonates with Neubauten's own attempts to explore the voice as part of their instrumentation, particularly in their early street acoustic work (*Stahlmusik)* and in more recent electronically treated experiments (*Musterhaus* and Bargeld's *Rede).*[298]

From the above discussion a dominant aspect emerges which is an essential part of Bargeld's delivery – that is the presence of the singer's body in the voice with its imperfections, hesitations, baggage and dirt; hence, I discuss this next as part of Barthes' 'grain' and Neubauten's rejection of the popular music standardised perfection. I then examine some of the group's own strategies for decomposing the voice and, as the voice under review is a German voice, the final section acknowledges this distinction.

[298] Connor's critique of the Reich work emphasizes the paralleling of the sound's bleeding with that of the flesh and the pulverizing of the voice through the looping with the beating; the phrase which Reich used was taken from evidence given by a black Civil Rights activist on the blood breaking through his bruises after a police beating (a necessary condition to prove the severity of the attack).

Porto & London 03 & 22.05.08 (Photographs taken by K Shryane for author)

1: Grain

This section considers Roland Barthes' desire for the residues of a singer's bodily life to penetrate the music. The discussion works through Neubauten's *Die genaue Zeit* ['Exact Time'], *Patienten O.T.*1983, which reiterates (in a popular sphere) much of Barthes' disparagement of the pheno-song (the grainless, perfect, classical delivery) in his essay, *The Grain of the Voice* (1977, pp.179-189).[299] Barthes argued for a transgressive, performative voice born in the body and life's experiences not trained in musical pedagogy. The pheno-song, he stated, is when the singer meets all the criteria of communication - genre, style, expression, feeling and personality - but 'nothing seduces, nothing sways us to jouissance… (it) never exceeds culture: here it is soul which accompanies the song, not the body' (1977, p.183). Barthes placed the pheno-song in the faultless delivery of classical performers

[299] R. Barthes, *Image, Music, Text,* (trans.) S.Heath, London, Fontana Press, 1977.

such as Fischer-Dieskau with their mastery of correct breathing and tone. Such 'flattened out' work merely suits its respective 'average culture' (Ibid., p. 185). Neubauten's disapproval of popular music's deadening format follows a similar argument:

es ist so flach hier. Zwischen 33 und 45
oder im 2-Stundentakt.
Es ist eine Frage der Lautstärke
und alle sind gleich, gleich
[it's so flat here. Between 33 and 45
or in a 2-hour rhythm.
It's a question of volume
and they're all the same, the same']

Here the critique permeates both text and delivery. Bargeld's voice is slow, slurred and heavy suggesting the weight of the pleasant formulaic musak (what Attali calls 'castration music' 1977/2006, p.111). The voice draws itself forward as if to shake off its flat (*flach* also means dull, shallow) surrounds; various distant noises persist and there is a slight rise in vocal energy which seems to anticipate possible disruption-

wie spät mag es sein?
Alles Studios der Welt
im gleichen Moment
abschalten

['What time could it be?

All the worlds' studios

all at the same time

switched off']

Zwischen 33 und 45 is whispered, with *45* hardly audible; these numbers must not be spoken – the years of Hitler's manipulation of music as well as the two designated speeds of commercial music reproduction:

Hör auf die Stimme deines Herrn

Auch Lakaien haben Taktgefühl

['Listen to your master's voice

even lackeys have a sense of timing'] [300]

Musak, the text informs us:

angenehm summend

hinterlässt keine Spuren/akkordnarben

in meinem Gesicht

['pleasantly hum(s)

leaving no traces, it creates no chord scars

in my face']

[300] The passive-listening HMV dog is referred to in another *Patient OT* track, *die Neue Sonne*.

It requires only Adorno's regressive listening for '*alle sind gleich, gleich'* ['all are the same, the same']. The second 'gleich' ends the work; there is a juddering as if the needle has stuck; it skips and the error triggers release from this musical prison.

In Barthes' earlier discourse, the formulaic classical singing voice is also levelled down to the measure of the long playing record (1977, p.183). This levelled delivery, for Barthes, comes only from the lungs – 'not the tongue, glottis, teeth, mucous membranes, nose' (Ibid., p.183). It is not representative of the wear and tear of a used, functioning language, and lacks the mystique of breathing which needs to be like the 'pneuma-soul swelling or breaking.' [301] What Barthes was advocating was geno-song which would carry the body in the voice, have weight, materiality and 'gesture support' – (a term credited to Philippe Sollers, Ibid., p.183). He is drawing on the *geno-text* as the bearer of the cracks of the voice, the hesitations, stutters, falters which ooze through the formula of the *pheno-text*'s communication. [302] For Barthes (1978, p.185) the pheno-song provides 'average' culture to suit the new majority who want 'an art that inoculates pleasure by reducing it to a known, coded emotion and reconciles the subject to what in music can be said.' Similarly, in *Die genaue Zeit* popular music is described as:

[301] Artaud expressed a similar concern for connected breathing in *The Theatre and its Double*.
[302] Both terms were originally used by Kristeva in the late 1960s to distinguish between primary text of shared meaning and cultural conventions and the secondary text of the voice's residues. Another critique is explored by Patrick Primoversi in his essay, *Theatre of Multiple Voices* (*Performance Research Journal*, vol. 8:1, 2003, pp.61-73). Here, Primoversi tracks the development of voice as sound and not information or sign from Artaud's expressed desires in wanting 'not just spoken voice but cries and physical energy to fill the theatre as an acoustic space…..A constant sonorous amplification, the sounds, noises and cries are first sought for their vibratory qualities, secondly for what they represent' (p.64 in essay).

Muzak für Leichenschauhäuser und Neubauten

['Musak for morgues and new buildings'].

Both Barthes' and Neubauten's criticisms contribute to the previously mentioned developments in vocality beyond 'good singing' which can also grapple with the unspeakable (as with the post-Holocaust body in Chapter 5). They point to those artists (many of whom were untrained or/and previously silenced) whose environmental and social realities shaped their unusual, corporeal, acoustic voices and non-phonemic delivery.

Simon Shepherd in *Voice, Writing, Noise* (Performance Research Journal, vol. 8:1, March 2003, no page numbers) found a related corporeal quality in melodrama, which he called 'syllabification.' This was the art of sounding and expanding every syllable, stretching and shaping it to enable the language to say more than its capability and immediate communication. Bargeld uses a similar technique from his street screams to his more theatrical-cabaret renditions. For example, in his play on the two syllables of the word '*kollaps'* the first swells out as the second appears to collapse back into the first, thus creating in sound the black hole of the collapse. Similarly, with '*Salamandria,'* Bargeld stretches the word so that its centre evaporates allowing the two ends to lick together suggesting the flickering motif of a reptile which reputedly spends it life in the embers.

Shepherd's own exemplar of this is the work of Roy Hart, whom he argues has utilised the raw, ugly, dark and inhuman aspects of the voice resulting in

the voluptuousness and corporeality which Barthes sought.[303] Shepherd calls such a voice Dionysian or the voice of the silenced satyr, Marsyas, who dared to challenge the musical supremacy of Apollo. Shepherd's preferred voices are marginalised ones such as those of Howling Wolf or Billie Holliday, whose respective voices were rooted in their body's life experiences and socio-economic circumstances. Similarly, Neubauten's early voice came out of the squats of a besieged, neurotic West Berlin where the protesters would 'drum on the barricades and shout for hours' *(Seele Brennt,* C.Beetz, 2000, DVD).[304]

2: Decomposing – die Stimme in Aufführung

[the voice in performance]

> Shatter the harmony then you can shatter the social system
>
> (Bargeld in Maeck, 1993, p.116).

This section now considers Neubauten's practice against the conventional voice. To illustrate their diverse range of vocalisation I have itemised a number of 'chords' (approaches) which Bargeld, as the lyricist of the group, has employed between 1980 and 2008. Although these are identified through a cross section of examples this should not suggest that the chosen pieces are comprehensive. Also, it is not intended that one piece of work provides full evidence of any one chord because in many cases, Bargeld engages in a

[303] An excellent example of Hart's work is to be found in Peter Maxwell-Davies' *Eight Songs for a Mad King*, 1969, Paul Silber archives.
[304] An interesting link between corporeality and the voice's grain is made in Dominic Symonds' paper *The Corporeality of Musical Expression: the grain of the voice and the actor-musician* Studies in Musical Theatre Vol. 1 no. 2, pp. 167-181. Intellect Ltd. 2007.

variety of strategies within one work which, in a live rendering, may well involve him in further improvisation.

Bargeld (interview with author 5 November 2004) stated that the voice is an easily portable instrument, free with the body; in a later interview (28 October 2006) he explained about obtaining an album of Ethiopian music (see Chapter 4:3 *Kreuzberg - abgewrackte Hure)* which had influenced his use of his own voice within the urban environment of Kreuzberg. Hence, in early Neubauten music, the voice was just one of the environmental strands; it consisted of improvised phrases and words intermittently shouted with Unruh's debris drumming and the street noise of the city (see *Stahlmusik- in einer Autobahnbrücke,* 1980). Bargeld's voice was not placed in the centre of the music until the middle period of work when the texts became more metaphorical and complex. These later, more centralised, scripted vocalisations were built from cut-ups, lists and free association based on a strategy devised by Bargeld and reminiscent of the group's instrumental rag-picking; they were laced with themes which sometimes suggest a latter day popular John Donne.[305] More recently, the voice in the *Musterhaus* series took its place again as 'borderline art' in the manner of George Brecht (Dezeuze, 2005) often occurring at the perceptual threshold, barely heard and possible to miss - perhaps, even accidental; it was there in its absence.[306]

[305] Benjamin described Kracauer as a rag-picker with words 'who with his stick spikes the snatches of speech and scraps of conversation in order to throw them into his cart' (Gilloch,1996, p.116).

[306] George Brecht used this term when describing an aspect of Fluxus art performance in which elements could be so slight that they could be missed however, they have still occurred. See A. Dezeuze, *Brecht for Beginners, George Brecht events – A Heterospective,* Papers of Surrealism, issue 4, Winter 2005, also Kahn (1999). These early Neubauten experiments sometimes resembled the sound researches by Tony Conrad, Angus Maclise, La Monte Young in New York during 1960s.

However, in *Alles Wieder Offen* (October 2007), the voice has become central once more in delivering the substantial lyrical content. Hence, as the early and some later work, places the voice as an occasional part of the musical texture**,** this is a useful starting chord.

In *Für den Untergang* (1980) the voice hums and whines, sometimes hardly audible within the metal drumming and guitar screeches; it is only one aspect of the created urban soundscape. There is a similar dislocation of the voice in *Steh auf Berlin /Krieg in den Stadt* (1981) which again employs the metal drumming but adds sounds of a pneumatic road drill and blasts of smashing, scratched metal and glass. Bargeld's hoarse shout comes through sporadically with '*Aufstehn, Hinlegen'* ['stand up, lie down']**.** A list of imperatives follows – *'Abstürzen, Einstürzen'* ['fall apart, collapse']; then the nouns – *'Autos, Fuer, Rauch, Krach, Steine, Ende, Schluss, Hölle'…* ['cars, fire, smoke, noise, stones, end, closure, hell'] - are thrown through the texture of noise like hand grenades. The tone, interspersed with throaty screams, seems celebratory - in no way, offensive or aggressive. Yet the direct verbs and repetition of '*ich'* give it a powerful thrust which works with the intense bursts of drumming. The final '*Ich steh auf'* ['I stand up'] screeches out. As with the first work cited, the vocal contribution here is just one of the strands creating the sonic texture of impending destruction cheerfully incited on the barricades; the quality is both cadaveric and energised.

A variation on the unfocused voice is Bargeld's vocalisation on the edge of perception which has already been likened to the borderline art of George

Brecht. The voice in *Armenia* (1983) provides a fitting example of this in its distant, subterranean effect and whispered broken syllables before it becomes a scream. This introduces another strategy; the use of an indecipherable whisper to encase a scream or extreme volume; such variation gives Neubauten theatricality and immediacy and serves to 'play the holes' (see below). For example, in *Seele Brennt* (1985) the howl of '*meine Seele brennt'* ['my soul burns'] is set against a hardly audible –

Ich versteck mich, sitz in meinem Loch
und warte auf die Träume, die mich retten

['I go and hide, sit in my hole
and wait for the dreams to save me']

which then is followed by a clearly audible '*kommen nicht.'* [307]

A different employment of near silence occurs in '*Silence is Sexy'* (2000), in which several songs focus on the sun, birds and the total eclipse (1999) which brought a moment of (true) emptiness, coldness and silence.[308] The title track starts with the lighting of a cigarette and the sounds of inhaling and exhaling against the microphone; the length of the track is fixed by the time it takes to finish the cigarette. Bargeld has explained that Neubauten's pursuit of silence

[307] As it appears in the written text- 'they don't come'.
[308] Birds and flight were becoming an important leitmotif for Neubauten. Apart from the eclipse motif (it was the sudden stillness and silence of the birds at the moment of the eclipse which was so remarkable) Bargeld has explained that *Silence is Sexy*'s holes are about remembrance and the disappearance of traces (Nick Terry, *Terroriser,* 2000, NBOA, sourced 10 November 2006).

is not solely that of Cage (that is to show silence as a whole world of sound) but also to create a sense of waiting, tension and absence by perforating holes in the music, in the sense of the unplayed notes (as in *Seele brennt)*. Bargeld's marginalised voice (whether from high volume distortion or deliberate inaudibility) entices the listener towards close and difficult listening and fulfils Neubauten's aim of listening with pain (and effort).

The middle section of work is dominated by both the polyphonic voice and the centralised narrative, solo voice. The former, when used as ritualistic, choric repetition can create a lament or give a work an incantatory quality. It is present in *Keine Schönheit ohne Gefahr* (1987) with the slow, hypnotic repetition of this phrase ['no beauty without danger'] over a horn-like drone, whereas *Ubique Media Dämon* (1993) employs a repetitive frantic, train-like rhythm. Using English (apart from the closing Latin) Bargeld precisely beats out the language with German enunciation telling us of the Media devil 'rushing the signal through the system' while the polyphonic voices build with the title. These two songs create vastly different effects: the first is heavy, resigned, almost somnolent while the second excitedly surges forward. Polyphony is frequently used with a range of effects; for example, in the incantations of *Ich Bin's* ['it's me'] (1987) which reflect its layered meanings (and its typography). Here, there are four strands running parallel and sometimes bleeding across – the light tom-tom drumming, the incantatory chorus of *ich bin's*, the narrative voice relating the dilemma of whether to respond to the knock on the door and the drawn out almost sneered '*Leer'*

['empty'] (see Chapter 9:3 *Das Strukturieren).*[309] The incantatory work can also create a light, spaß piece; for example, in *Dingsaller* (2000) the repetition of '*Dingsaller'* becomes '*Allerdings'* changing the meaning from 'how any' to 'indeed'. The final journey of the piece is a long, polyphonic, rhythmic rendering of a chorus chanting '*allerdings'* with Bargeld interjecting *'Exklusiv'* but then allowing the rest of the final line *('für die, die nichts geschrieben steh'* ['for those for whom nothing stands in writing']) to be submerged within the chorus of '*allerdings/dingsaller*.' *Halber Mensch* (1985) also offers excellent evidence of the polyphonic approach in its triple structure, its male and female acapella rendering and mantras; its vocal structure is best understood by looking at the layout on the page in '*Headcleaner'* (1997, pp.16-21).*[310]*

The second section of this centralised vocal work, the solo voice, can be distinguished by two styles; the passionate cry and the detached, sprechgesang delivery. The latter often seems to refer to the seeming minutiae of life while the former imparts something urgent or painful. *Sehnsucht* (1981*)* offers a good example of the impassioned yell; it is a work often revisited by Neubauten and is closely associated with them. The word '*Sehnsucht'* which frequents German song and literature and is most commonly translated as longing or desire, is delivered in the song as two distinct, extended syllables with the final consonant sharply and abruptly sounded. This has the effect of transforming the abstract noun into an

[309] Bargeld has said that the work was in retaliation to media images of him; hence *'ich bin's'* is an impersonalising of self. Death is alluded to as the caller for whom one should not open up, as with the police because the phrase is also the standard response to the householder's 'who is it?' from the German police when attempting to gain entry.

[310] B. Bargeld, *Headcleaner,* Berlin, Die Gestalten Verlag, 1997. There are also several works from *Grundstück* which could be cited; in particular, *Vox Populi* with the social choir (see Chapter 10).

imperative. *Abfackeln* [‘Torch’] 1983, has the same urgency but the singing is less dominated by imperatives as the use of the verb *lassen* (which means ‘to let, allow to happen’ – for example, ‘*lasst unsere Seelen abfackeln’* [‘lets torch our souls’]) gives the piece a sense of the youthful excitement of cooperative (possibly political) action.

The dispassionate, objective solo pieces tend to be reflective. In *DNS Wasserturm (*1983*)* a matter-of-fact, slightly-muffled speaking voice is accompanied by threatening, grumbling, subterranean sounds; however, it continues to recall in an unperturbed manner its dream story of a cut finger and DNA. *12 Städte* (1987*)* begins with a slight creaking noise; the listener strains to pick up these slender signs of life until Bargeld’s speaking voice comes in low and slow. Gradually an equally deep and measured metal beat, like the dull clang of a church bell enters and the voice rises slightly, but the overall effect is of nocturnal deliberations on the wear and tear of constant touring (see Chapter 5:3 *Antibodies*).

Another work on this album (*Fünf auf der nach oben offenen Richterskala,* 1987) is *Kein Bestandteil sein* [‘to be no part of it’] -Neubauten’s familiar critique of the music industry – (see Chapter 10) has a deep spoken voice which is unhurried and unmoved, despite the fast tom tom drumming, ethereal pipes and upbeat percussion, in its demand for a new noise of ‘bird screeches’ and ‘tremors as high as possible on the open-ended Richter scale.’ The closing mantra of ‘*will, will, will, will’* [‘want, want, want, want’] is almost an

afterthought; perhaps reminding us of the strength of mind needed not to become a *'Partikel im Netz'* ['a particle in the net'].

The Garden (1996) was ragpicked from an overheard conversation in the Prado Museum Shop, and along with *Beauty* (2000) and *Airplane 3 & 4* (2003*),* are four English language spoken statements which have a deceptive simplicity and illustrate an actorly strand to Bargeld's use of the voice. *Prolog* (1989) has a speaking (German) voice which also has a very theatrical, deliberate tone (and performance); this links with Bargeld's voice work for Heiner Müller's *Hamletmaschine* and *Bildebeschreibung* and Schwab's *Faust* where his vocal quality has a Brechtian distancing which draws attention to itself. [311] The other development in which the voice became central is when it acquired a strong entertainer-author presence with the big 'cabaret-style' performances such as *Redukt* (2000), *Selbsportrait mit kater* (2004), *Youme and Meyou* (2004) and *Dead Friends* (2004). Although the (theatrical) delivery of these is more accessible, the growing *spaß* quality of Bargeld's diverse intonation, his puns, allusions and choric responses with other group members help to sustain an authenticity and individuality as does his use of clicks, sucks, blows and tapping the teeth or cheeks. Such additions serve to remind us of Barthes' grain (which requires more than the vocal chords and breath) and which can also be found in the many diverse, onomatopoeic and tactile environments of Neubauten's work. For example, there is the playful *MoDiMiDoFrSaSo* (1987), the improvised *Pelikanol* (2000) and the very

[311] The development of Bargeld's centralised solo voice as sprechgesang at this time was part of his growing interest in theatre, film and television work. *Prolog* is quoted on page 356.

atmospheric *Insomnia (*2002*)* in which the yawning quality of the speaking voice encapsulates its subject matter. [312]

The final section considers the treated, looped, electronic vocalisation which moves Neubauten's work out of the rock arena into a more experimental niche. This aspect is best illustrated (apart from the *Rede* work) in the *Musterhaus* explorations, which Bargeld called 'the more experimental side of Neubauten' (interview with author 10 November 2005). Here, as previously mentioned, the voice returns to the background as part of the (electronically treated) landscape, even at times being almost irrelevant.[313] In *Anarchitektur (1:* 2005) it forms an occasional mantra from the title; in *Unglaublicher Lärm (2:* 2005) it moves aside into the 'missed' zone. This work creates layer upon layer of sound which suggests among other things, a medley of parodied motorik musik, Classic FM, Radio Sunshine as well as metal and motors. All this is orchestrated into waves which ebb and flow with an overall sense of a slow, painful journey indicative of much of Neubauten's work. Amidst this caravan of sounds, periodically, it is just about possible to decipher a human voice, muffled, unobserved, slowed down like a yawn or a groan, a piece of swallowed text – '*Ohne Sie, im Garten, ein, zwei, drei'*, a breathy 'I*'*, a rhythmic 'oh yea', snatches of intoned 'eee' or some high squeaks of radio tuning or mechanical nonsense-speak. As the wall of noise moves on, these little hiccups are too distant and too brief to make a difference; even the

[312] The two earlier examples are vocally very different: Bargeld reinvents Stockhausen's *Stimme* with the days of the week in *MoDiMiDoFrSaSo* as a pop song parody. *Pelikanol* (the most experimental work on *Silence is Sexy*) is an 18.32 minute improvised piece dedicated to a brand of school glue. Bargeld vocalises on a brief nonsense statement concerning the glue against an installation of amplified aluminium strips.

[313] In the *Rede* the voice is the treated instrumentation as there is no accompaniment of any kind.

trademark scream is forgotten long before the Pandora's lid is slammed tightly on the recaptured noises. The brief presence of human utterance appears accidental, playfully suggesting that the voices are in error; they should not have been picked up.

Stimmen Reste (7: 2006) is an excellent example of the range of Neubauten's vocal experiments. It was created from voice recordings overlaid with manipulated polystyrene, electronic pulses, metal, organ and guitar. Its centre piece, *Kernstück,* is a 20 minute slowed, swirled, muddy rework of *Vox Populi* from *Grundstück's* Social Choir (followed by two minutes of Bargeld uttering 'death' on each out-breath). The playfulness and diversity extends through the last four tracks: from the 40 seconds of *Semiotische Musik* of non-phonemic aahs and oohs, the shrill, quivering heights of the trilling *Grillen, Gestern*'s pulsed conversational cut-ups to Unruh's homage to the Dadaist word-collage performances of Kurt Schwitters and Hugo Ball entitled *Hawonnnti (*written for him by Bargeld)[314]*.* The final *Musterhaus* 8, *Weingeister* (April 2007) reduces the voice to sounds of swallowing and tasting with results which are hardly present, thus returning to George Brecht's borderline art (see Chapter 10:2d *Musterhaus*).[315]

[314]Schwitters (1887-1948) was a German artist who worked in many genres including Dadaism and Constructivism; Ball (1886-1927) was a German poet and leading Dadaist artist who wrote a nonsense poem called *Karawane* in 1916.

[315] Although the most recent album, *Alles Wieder Offen* (October 2007) has partially recentralised the *author*itarian voice (the emphasis is on song writing here) there are many of the above techniques employed. The opening Reichian piece, *Die Wellen* ['the waves'] has a rhythmic sprechgesang which builds against a repeated motif; steadily the voice unfurls, suspends and crashes imitating its subject matter. The closing piece, *Ich warte* ['I wait'] uses a similar repetitive expanding structure for the central voice, as do *Ich hatte ein Worte* ['I had a word'] and *Unvollständigkeit* ['Incompleteness']. However, *Lets do it a-Dada* and *Weilweilweil* ['because, because, because'] include a metal cacophony of extraneous noises and polyphonic voices as well as the central voice. *Blue Ice* omits the 'intentional' voice altogether. *Von Wegen* ['of ways'] delays the voice with some hardly perceived bubbles

Some of the most unique examples of Bargeld's acoustic vocal games with electronic treatment are found in his solo *Rede* presentations. As each performance has a different starting point (the concerns are similar to those of Neubauten - DNA, interim states, the cosmos, formulaic musak, classificatory systems…) and the outcome is variable, there is a strong improvisational feel to the work. Bargeld utters his sounds, screams, clicks, shouts and other vocal noises (sometimes, brief phrases like 'the machine might fail') into the microphone while electronically manipulating them with the four foot pedals of the Jam Man. The sounds are immediately mixed, looped, distorted, layered and otherwise treated by Neubauten's sound engineer, Boris Wilsdorf who is positioned at the mixing desk in the centre of the auditorium. The two, communicate via a set of complex hand signals, (concerning the treatment, development or abandonment of the sounds) which provide a metatext performance in its own right. Some pieces evolve over several minutes into a complex grid of noise; others work horizontally from a single word or drone. This acoustic architecture, having been built (some are mutually abandoned by Bargeld and Wilsdorf via hand signs as unworkable) is either allowed to collapse gradually through several mutations or is instantly dissolved into silence. These performances include most of the techniques (in particular, a fascination with the play possibilities of vowel and consonant sounds) discussed above and can be more experimental as Bargeld is not restricted

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reminiscent of NEU! A similar delay occurs (as slight rustles and metal vibrations hold off the treated central voice) in *Venuskolonnie.*

by a song structure, a set list or the expectations of a rock ethos. Bargeld introduces them as 'pseudo-scientific and alchemy…not unkomisch.' [316]

Rede at Preston, 21.10.06 (Photograph taken by author)

3: Muttersprache

You my words with me go-

ing, crippled, you

my straight ones

(Celan, *Gesammelte Werke*, 1983, p.237).[317]

[316] Bargeld undertook similar work (without Boris Wilsdorf) in 1998 with Dr. Maria Zinfert as researcher and assistant, called *Temporäre CD-Brenneri*. It was performed 16 – 30 May 1998 at the Contemporary Fine Arts Gallery in Berlin-Mitte. The exhibition rooms became a laboratory open to the public for the immediate production of CDs. Sounds, signals and notes were collected and burned onto discs which, over the days, were marked up as traces on the walls of the gallery - the *Schlaufen, Schliefen und Knoten* ['Straps, Bows and Knots'] to demonstate the growing complexity of sound as a distillery or power station.

One unique aspect of Neubauten's vocal techniques, already referred to in the opening Prologue, and focused as important by Maeck, Teipel and Bohn, is their consistent use of their mother-tongue as a performative medium. Inspired by Ton Steine Scherben, Neubauten have always made their own language their first mode of expression. Both the reluctance to use 'the German of the Destroyer' after 1945[318] and the rediscovered pride in being German which came with the new generation of German artists and musicians (in the wake of the Student Movement) have been mentioned in *Kattrins Trommel,* so here the focus is on what Neubauten have achieved with, and for, their language.

Neubauten have, through their work, helped to de-emphasize the language's associated aggression and harshness.[319] They have also aided a revival in the appreciation of German's lyricism, melancholy and sehnsucht once associated with its *Denkers, Dichters* and *Liedermachers*.[320] This has occurred because of the group's avoidance of militarism, punk-fuelled invectives and any sense of pre-planned propagandistic strategy due, in part, to the improvised, spontaneous ethos of their early gigs. Also, the somewhat androgynous and incantatory quality of Bargeld's voice (as with Nico) allows

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[317] Sourced from John Felstiner's *Mother Tongue, Holy Tongue: On Translating and not Translating Paul Celan* (1986). Article sourced from *Comparative Literature,* vol.38, 2, Spring 1986, pp. 113-136 ,www.jstor.org accessed 16.10.07.
[318] This is Michael Hamburger's phase in his introduction to Paul Celan's *Selected Poems*, (trans.) M. Hamburger, London, Penguin Books,1995, p.29.
[319] This view was expressed by many non-German supporters interviewed at the Grundstück event (4 November 2004).
[320] The Goethe Institute, one of whose aims was/is the rehabilitation and celebration of the German language and culture abroad, has sponsored Neubauten and Bargeld's international work.

the glottal stop to be employed without its military harshness and sense of threat while enhancing its performative plosive attributes. This can be heard in any number of Bargeld's enunciated sprechgesang deliveries such as *Prolog.* The group's sense of communalism (not national *volksseele)* and a humbling mix of yearning and error have also aided this process. Although aspects of the German language are unambiguous and literal (after all, is not an umbrella, a *Regenschirm* and a Caesarean birth, a *Kaiserschnitt* and *Durchfall,* diarrhoea*)* many post-Stunde Null writers such as Celan and Müller, chose a crafted polysemy which employed a new ambiguity dissociated from any Nazi-influenced precision. This dislocated, often alienated idiom used repetition, seemingly random lists, a deliberate lack of punctuation, diverse words with identical pronunciation, inverted or odd compound constructions, multi-lingualism and broken syntax. Furthermore, a use of unidentified personal pronouns seemed to leave any direct (possibly strident) voice from a protagonist diffused and uncertain.[321] Such devices can be found in Bargeld's use of language and serve to render his texts puzzling yet attractive to hear and read - the list of disassociated objects in *Alles, ein Stück im alten Still* is a characteristic example.*[322]* Even a brief familiarity with the group's work will highlight the existence of polysemous words; for example, *Erster Geschoss* from *Haus der Lüge* means both first floor and projectile/missile and is

[321] Here, particular note is taken of the reductive, repetitive, enigmatic wound-exposed work of Paul Celan, the disrespectful, wrongfully assembled dialogues of Werner Schwab's marionette characters and, especially the overloaded, disconnected snapshots and capitalised phrases of Heiner Müller, who deliberately courted obscurity in order to avoid baggage. For Paul Celan's use of German see John Felstiner's *Mother Tongue, Holy Tongue: On Translating and not Translating Paul Celan* (1986) for discussion on his use of odd compounds, repetition, fractured syntax, archaic, multi and Hebraic lingualism and truncated syllables- some of which can be found in Neubauten's lyrics.The opening poem fragment is from this source.

[322] *Quellnymphen Dionysos/ Substanzen Steptanzen/Trommelstöcke Rosenstöcke/Neue Schuhe, schöne Knie* ['spring nymphs, Dionysus, substances, tap dances, drumsticks, rose shrubs, new shoes, nice knees'] [*Everything, a piece in the old style,* 2000].

acoustically close to *Schoss* ['lap/womb'] and *Schuss* ['shot']. *Der Zellkern* from *Zerstörte Zelle* implies a prison cell, a city, nucleus/membrane or even the Wall; *Grundstück* is an empty space, a building plot, a piece of ground, a theatre work and a floorpiece. Bargeld also varies the stress, pause and arrest points within the long, combined Germanic noun system (e.g. *Grundsteinlegung* ['cornerstone ceremony'] or *Leichenschauhäuser* ['morgues']; he uses reversion to create different meanings (*von Fundament bis Firmament, vom Fundament bis zur Firm; allerdings/dingsaller; an Stelle/an der Stelle);*[323] para pronunciation (e.g. *verkauften, verschaukelten, verbrauchten, ketzer, texter)* to create an effective dramatic delivery and a play on meaning as in *'Grundstück'* where the beasts are long in hiding but still there under the layers ('*Schichten')* under the stories ('*Geschichten')* under the history ('*Geschichte').* Similar to Celan, Bargeld also employs multi-lingualism, especially Latin but also French, Japanese and Hebrew (see footnote above).

There are many examples of unattributed pronouns as in *Sie* (Chapter 9) and the alteration of a word's function to pun on its meaning (for example, in *unseasonable weather/Grundstück,* the noun *der Zeitgenossen- '*contemporaries'- becomes the adjective *genossen-* 'enjoyed' - when repeated (with)out *Zeit* (in Partridge's translation it is 'conned' out of time). Hence, it mocks the noun as well as modifying it– see Chapter 10:2c, *A Social Act*). All of these techniques, as typography and performance, draw attention to the

[323] 'From base to firmament, from its basement to the firm' implies from earth to heaven, from the powerless, in the basement to the powerful, the Firm upstairs. *Allerdings* and *Dingsaller* respectively means 'how any' and 'indeed'*. An Stelle* and *an der Stelle* becomes 'instead' and 'in the stead' (of my soul).

creative possibilities of the German language and rid it of its stereotyped inflexibility and severity by denying any one meaning or linearity. Neubauten's commitment to German as the written and performative medium continued through 2007-2008; only two songs out of the fourteen on the last album to date, *Alles Wieder Offen*, contain a brief English phrase or refrain.

Amsterdam 04.04.05 (Photograph taken by K. Shryane for author)

This chapter has examined Neubauten's strategies against the conformist rock/popular music voice as part of the vocal experimental scene which extended from the Dadaists, through Artaud to composers like Xenakis and Reich and to freeform performers such as Damo Suzuki and Phil Minton. The one aspect of Bargeld's vocalisations for Neubauten (including his solo work) most commented on, apart from his diverse and creative use of the German language is the scream. It has been a central aspect of Neubauten's work since the early 1980s and in performance, is eagerly anticipated by supporter and press photographer alike. The following chapter continues the above

discussion on vocal experimentation by examining Neubauten's use of the scream within a context of twentieth century art.

Chapter Eight: **STRATEGIEN GEGEN den Schrei**

[against the scream]

You must howl, do you hear, otherwise it proves nothing

(Beckett, *The Unnameable*, p.357).[324]

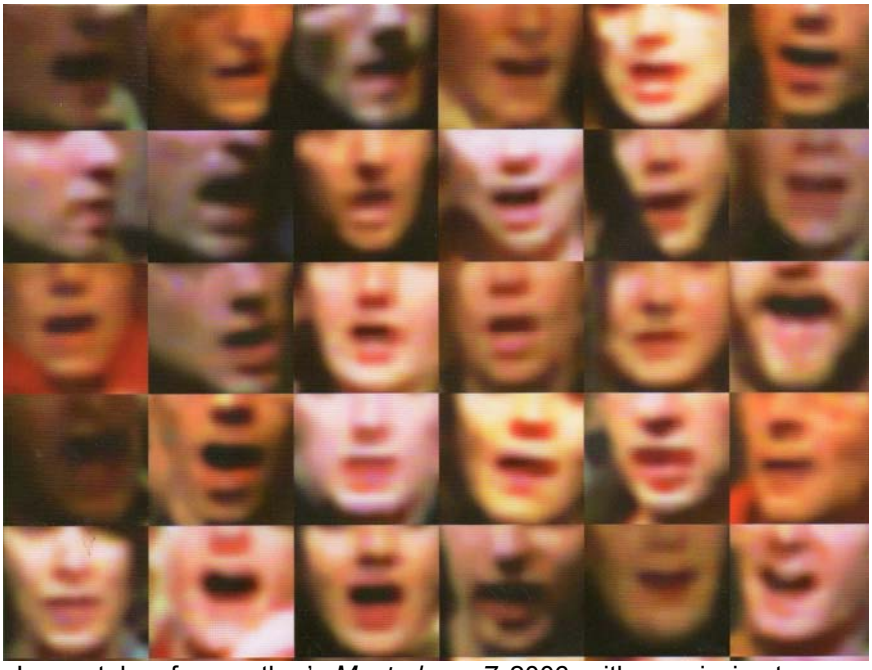


Image taken from author's *Musterhaus 7,* 2006, with permission to use

Introduction

Like strangled cats or dying children.....

(Liebeslieder, 1993, VHS)

…as if someone had pulled a thistle out of his soul

(Nick Cave describing Bargeld's scream)

(Maeck, 1996, p.86)

[324] S. Beckett in *Trilogy,*1994 edition, London, Calder Publications.

There is clearly a close relationship between noise-music and the scream. Both deny the accepted codes of musical or verbal communication as both are associated with the visceral and gestural; neither entails 'easy listening' as both are usually in excess, being dangerous and disruptive; both involve a very physical experience for the performer and recipient and both have a vital relationship in performance with silence. The scream is a central aspect of Artaud's vocalisation and hence, it is a vital ingredient of Neubauten's performance strategies and destructive philosophy.

For Neubauten, in the early years, there was no attempt to distinguish the noise of metal and found objects from Bargeld's screams and howls. Neubauten's scream, as with their texts, changed with the band's development to encompass a diversity which includes both the lyricism (and more central positioning) of the 1990s and the electronic experiments of *Musterhaus* (2005-7). In the *Rede* performances (of the mid-nineties onwards) Bargeld's scream is often representative of the sound worlds he created – for example the spinning, astronomical bodies in his sonically-created solar system. The scream dominated his direction of *Warten auf die Barbaren* (2005/6) as the bodiless cries of the tortured*;* it was central to his Sónar performance (Barcelona, June 2007) with FM3 and it is present in a variety of guises on *Alles Wieder Offen* (October 2007).

A dictionary definition of 'scream' is quite brief: 'a sharp piercing cry or sound, especially one denoting fear or pain' (Collins, 1992). However, Bargeld's scream (despite Cave's comments previously quoted) is nearly always a

scream of exhilaration and ecstasy, the scream of a child's delight (not its death), of adult longing and of an unchained voice.[325] At times Bargeld's scream can be both spiritual and bestial; it is often incantatory, high-pitched, androgynous and usually in excess. It has many variations and despite its pre-symbolic state, these are capable of analysis. One effective strategy is to apply Rudolph Laban's *Efforts* and *Qualities* [326] which were devised to catalogue and teach dance movement. For example using Laban's categories, Bargeld can employ a punch scream (heavy, direct, sudden), a wring scream (heavy, indirect, sustained) or a flick scream (light, indirect, sudden) and so forth. Laban's vocabulary provides a valuable interpretative tool for observing and considering both Bargeld's physical execution (effort) and the resulting sound (quality); it is also helpful in reaffirming the range of Bargeld's screams and the fact that they are always firmly rooted in the whole body. [327]

The contextual approaches applied here continue the previous discussion on the expansion of vocal techniques with particular reference to the work of the German teacher, Alfred Wolfsohn (1896-1972). His pioneering voice work linked psychotherapy with a freed, extended vocal range and Artaud's ideas on 'Affective Athleticism' in order to overcome Western culture's stultification

[325] This is an expression in common use amongst practitioners seeking to free the voice from Western restraints of correctness and inhibitions; Alfred Wolfsohn was one of the first users. It is found in Noah Pikes' *Dark Voices,* Woodstock USA: Spring Journal Books, 1999.
[326] The full range of Laban's Efforts and Qualities can be found in Jean Newlove's *Laban for Actors and Dancers*, London: Nick Hern Book, 1998.
[327] Despite some earlier association, Neubauten's scream is of a very different quality to that of a *punk* scream which was not a scream as a 'text' or a musical motif (as Bargeld uses the scream). Rather it was that the punk-rockers *screamed out* their shouts, incitements and declamations. This behaviour had more in common with the employment of the scream in combat training to increase adrenalin and aggression than as part of the tapestry of sound and silence, control and excess which occurs in Neubauten's work.

of the (adult) voice. During the 1940s and 1950s, Wolfsohn lived in London where he worked on his techniques to free the voice. He deduced that as adults we need to relearn how to shout, cry, laugh and scream (without inhibitions, as in infancy) as an essential part of our own self-knowledge. Although much of Wolfsohn's teaching centred on the psychotherapeutic aspects of an uninhibited voice –'When I speak of singing I do not consider this to be an artistic exercise but the possibility, and the means to recognise myself and to transform this recognition into conscious life' (Wolfsohn/Pike, 1999, p.34) - there are strong theatrical links too. For example, Wolfsohn's statement that 'the grown-up has forgotten how to open his mouth in a natural way; by adjusting himself to the world around him, he has forgotten how to scream' (1999, pp.38/9) is similar to Artaud's observation that, '(i)n Europe no one knows how to scream anymore' (Corti, 1970, p.95).[328] Wolfsohn also tutored the actor, Roy Hart, who subsequently became one of the best exponents in the theatre, of Wolfsohn's extended octave range of sprechstimme and non-phonemic vocalisations. The following two sections provide first a general artistic grounding for the scream in performance and then more specifically, three 'artistic' screams in different media which have some direct relevance for Neubauten. The third section analyses Bargeld's use of the scream.

[328] Artaud's statement is primarily criticising performers who 'no longer know how to cry out […] having forgotten they have a body on stage, they have lost the use of their throat' (1970, p.95).

1: The Scream in Context

> The scream serves no purpose; it will be of no help to anyone
>
> (Francisco Goya in Hrvatin, 1997, p. 85).[329]
>
> It is rapture of a kind
>
> (Coetzee/ Zinfert*, Warten auf die Barbaren,* 2005*).*

The scream is still not an easy presence in contemporary Western art and music despite the innovative work undertaken by Wolfsohn, Hart and those artists cited in the last chapter, who have worked to utilise inter-cultural ideas and to extend vocal delivery beyond purveying logos. Grout (2005, p.31) argued that any association of delight in melody for its own sake in Western culture or the experience of the ecstasy of musical sounds was from medieval times condemned as pagan by the Christian church: 'Only that music is good which, without obtruding its own charms, opens the mind to Christian teachings and disposes the soul to holy thoughts'; whereas in the East, music could be valued for its power to promote a state of ecstatic detachment from earthly things. In a similar fashion Emil Hrvatin (1997, p.82) states that the voice chained by language's intellectual subjugation has long been regarded as the privileged object of Western theatre. It was this voice which Artaud wished to disrupt with incantation, shouts, screams and vocal vibrations. The pursuit of this disruption in what Hrvatin calls 'post-Artaudian anthropological theatre' (ibid) (presumably that of Brook, Grotowski, Barba et al), utlised the oral, ritual theatre of Africa and the East for 'a speech beyond language, a voice that is not separated from the body' (1997, p.82). These non-Western

[329] Emil Hrvatin, *The Scream* in *Performance Research* 2.1 Routledge, 1997, pp.82-91.

interests, coupled with the experiments of artists mentioned in the previous chapter, rendered vocality dangerous, pre-symbolic and outside the rule of authority. The scream was an essential aspect of this.

The performed or artistically depicted scream (the cultural scream) continues to have transgressive connotations and can provoke disturbance and discomfort, unlike many other liminal performative/artistic strategies (blasphemy, nudity, coitus) which have lost their shock-value and rebellious connotations. (Hence, the persistent employment of screaming by Bargeld significantly contributes to Neubauten's distinctive style and somewhat inimitable outsider status.) Yet, according to Barber (1999, p.107),[330] the scream remains a 'primary obsession and an artistic preoccupation.' [331] Joanne Gottlieb and Gayle Wald, in writing about female singers who use the scream in *Riot, grrrls, revolution and women in rock* (*The Popular Music Studies Reader*: 2006, p.359), identified it with 'highly charged events – like rape, orgasm, childbirth, often associated with femininity at its most vulnerable.' [332]

[330] S. Barber, *The Screaming Body,* Washington, DC, Creation Books, 1999.
[331] Although the scream is represented in the first icons of Christ's torment and ecstasy, the German Enlightenment writer and critic G E Lessing (1729-1781) expressed his censure in his critique of the classical sculpture, *Laocoon and his Sons* (Vatican Museum, Rome, c175-150BCE); this he judged to have a 'repulsive effect' in its depiction of Laocoon's agonised howl (Lessing in Blocker, 2004, p.19-21).
[332] The open mouth is linked to the labia. Juliana Snapper argues that the experimental post-war voice is predominantly female (*Hysteria, Hystericism and the Post-war Feminine Voice,* 2009, www. julianasnapper.com accessed 13.09.09.

Photograph – www.francis-bacon.cx/themes

However, the performed scream is neither male nor female, for it is not about the personality, individuality or gender - in the same way that Barthes' grain is not about gender or subjectivity (training or talent). Hegarty expands on this in his critique of Artaud's proposed (1947) radio broadcast, *Pour en finir avec le jugement de dieu* (2007, pp.30-32). Here he describes the performers' voices as material, both in the sense of Bataille's base materialism and as material-corporeal particles which can actually cause pain - an interesting concept in view of Neubauten's references to ears and mouths as wounds. Hegarty argues that Artaud's ideas had already bypassed those of Barthes for the voices in *Pour en finir* lose their individualised grain as the grain of the work takes over and crosses from one performer to the next regardless of gender: 'when the voice is becoming noise it is also losing gender.' [333] The result is that *Pour en finir,* through its aural assault, creates the image of a screaming (organless?) body. This corporeality of sound has been achieved (in reverse)

[333] His observation that the posture for a scream - head thrown back so that the mouth is a prolongation of the spine, as in an animal - visually adds to this concept of being genderless.

by a few visual artists whose depictions of the scream have implied an expolsion of sound - for example, Francis Bacon's attempts during the late 1940s, to capture a scream on canvas as perfect as that in Eisenstein's *The Battleship Potemkin* (1925).[334]

2: Three Cultural Screams

The most influential source for Neubauten's scream was Artaud's *Pour en finir avec le jugement de dieu* (SR92, 1995) which Bargeld had hoped to direct with Heiner Müller.[335] In this Artaud emits a polyphony of screams spliced with - what he called *bruitage* (Barber,1999, p.97) - effects of percussion, bangs, invented language, apocalyptic laughter and text. Artaud's screams range from high-pitched, full-bodied utterances to bird-like screeches. These Bargeld has replicated and developed into a diverse range of utterances from the back-of-the-throat cadaveric cry (the slash or the dab*)* to the whole body, life-giving outpourings (the press or the thrust*)*. Between these two points, for Bargeld, there are of course, many variations (which also differ in effort and quality) depending on whether the scream forms part of a text, and hence may transmute from or into language, or is primarily acting as sound texture with the found and created object-based noise.[336] Steven Barber's argument (1999, p.101) not only notes that the scream is the core of the recording of

[334] 'I did hope one day to make the best painting of the human cry. I was not able to do it and it's much better in the Eisenstein and there it is' (Bacon in Barber, 1999, p.109).
[335] Müller died in 1995 before further projects could be jointly undertaken. Also see Part One, Prologue– *A Cry from the Stairwell* and *in einer Autobahnbrücke.*
[336] In part eight of *To be Done with the Judgement of God,* entitled '*My Cry from the Stairwell'* Artaud screams indistinct words in a Dadaist fashion, spewed out with anger and disgust and jumbled with guttural 'nonsense' sounds and obscenities. This tangible environment of a hollow, echoing confinement and cold metal is frequently found in many of Neubauten's audio recordings (e.g. *Stahlmusik,* 1980, *Patienten OT,* 1983).

Pour en finir for 'it emerges from, projects and visualises the body' but also its interaction with the work's silences; he judges that this interaction generates 'a volatile and tactile material of sound, image and absence' (Ibid., p.101). This description befits Neubauten's use of both the scream and silence and is especially commented on here within *Warten auf die Barbaren*.[337]

Two other cultural screams which further illustrate the interdependency of image and sound, and which can offer perspectives on Neubauten's use of the scream are Nancy Spero's painting *Why couldn't it have been some world without numbers or letters* (1969*)* and Bill Viola's video work, *Anthem* (1983). Spero's gaping hole works well as an illustration of Neubauten's early music for the painting suggests corporeal noise, black holes, ritual dance and collapse. Dada nonsense poetry is scrawled in blood-red and the title is suspended 'like an incantation' (*Nancy Spero,* 1996, p.14).[338] Lucy Bradnock in her article on the work entitled *Lost in Translation? Nancy Spero, Antonin Artaud, Jacques Derrida* (2005)[339] states that sound becomes the means by which the shapes of the image can be understood.

[337] There are several aspects of Barber's critique of *Pour en finir* which are relevant to Neubauten's work as well as to the *Rede* and *Warten auf die Barbaren* (Barber, 1999, p.102).
[338] *Nancy Spero,* J. Bird, J.A. Isaak, & S. Lotringer (eds) London: Phaidon Press, 1996.
[339] Bradnock, L. (2005). *Papers of Surrealism, Issue 3, Spring 2005, Lost in Translation?* www.surrealismcentre.ac.uk accessed 11.12.05.

W*hy couldn't it have been some world without numbers or letters* (1969)
Nancy Spero (1996, Bird, Isaak & Lotringer)[340]

Bill Viola's eleven minute video '*Anthem'* (1983)[341] creates a spiritual affirmation which Neubauten's scream often achieves; it works with silence and near stillness – qualities also used by Bargeld to encase his screams. Viola's work begins with a single piercing scream emitted by an eleven year old girl, in a white dress; she is standing alone in the cavernous hall of Los Angeles' Union Railroad Station which is framed to look like a cathedral**.** The original scream is not heard immediately. It is 'extended and shifted in time to produce a primitive scale of seven harmonic notes, which constitute the soundtrack of the piece' (Viola, 1973-94 in Violette, 1995, p.119).[342] Viola stated that the emitted sound is close in form and function to a religious chant. In *Note July 1982* (Ibid., p.119) he said that *Anthem* is an attempt to come 'to terms with the environment in which I live.' What is produced is a searing howl; at times it is low, like a roar of a storm wind; at other moments it is

[340] There is a striking similarity here with one of Baselitz's Artaudian paintings entitled *The Poet* (1965, RAA edition, 2007, p. 69).
[341] Copy and slides kindly loaned to author by Bill Viola Studios for this research (Videotape, colour, stereo sound. Photo: Kira Perov).
[342] B. Viola, *Reasons for Knocking at an Empty House Writings, 1973-94,* (ed.) R. Violette, London, Thames and Hudson, 1995.

muffled, prolonged like a death rattle or like a siren (modernity's scream) burning across the slowed images of machinery, nature, medicine and shopping. Only at the end does it become clear that the scream is uttered by the girl when her silent mouth opens and we hear the long drawn-out sounds embodying, as Jean-Christophe Ammann (Violette, 1995, p.13/20) commented, 'both the violence and the beauty of life […] This scream is violence […] this scream is the will to live.'

These three 'cultural' screams are open to other readings (all have inspired many critiques), but Douglas Kahn (1999, p.345-349) in discussing what he terms 'screams trafficked in culture' argues that while they assert themselves, they elude meaning and hence are like noise, whereas screams in their 'natural habitat' are communication and demand urgent or empathetic response. Emil Hrvatin in his (already referenced) essay *The Scream* in *Letters from Europe* (1997, p.86) seems less convinced of this point. He details two screams; the child's first le cri pur, the primal scream of the in-fans (Latin- 'who does not speak') and the second, le cri pour, a human/animal scream for somebody, a demand for the presence of the (m)other. However, this second scream, Hrvatin counter-argues only appears to be an act of communication and to have a social function: 'It is not an act which would convey what language cannot: rather it conveys directly that language cannot convey anything (anymore)'(Ibid.). He concludes that any response to the scream is always too late for the breakdown of the subject has already occurred (Ibid., p.86-7). This is ironically best illustrated by a 'cultural' scream – one of the most seminal (but communicative) screams of twentieth century

art - that of Helene Weigel as Mother Courage (1949, Berlin) 'whose monumental sculptural gesture […] der stumme Schrei' (Kolb, 2005, p.82)[343] swept the theatre like a hurricane bowing the audience with its unheard blast (as George Steiner so vividly described in *The Death of Tragedy*, 1991, p. 234).

Helene Weigel and her inspiration- detail from *Guernica*.
(Barba/Savarese, 1991, p.234-5)[344]

This dark, *soundless* scream of Mother Courage links to Bargeld's use of dark, *bodiless* audible screams in *Warten auf die Barbaren,* for each is beyond language while communicating far more, in the face of human cruelty, than language can; in the words of Peter Brook on Weigel's gest (Kolb, 2005, p. 83), (when) 'the mouth is closed, the silent call remains.' Neubauten's performed scream was originally born out of a pre-language state of improvisation, a rejection of Anglo-American and Schlager ditties, and

[343] M. Kolb, *The Mask as Interface: Brecht, Weigel and the Sounding of Silence,* IBS Conference, February 2005. www.german.lss.wisc.edu/brecht/communications accessed 12.10.08.

[344] E. Barba & N. Savarese, *The Secret Art of the Performer,* London: Routledge, 1991.

impatience with not being late enough. It conveyed infectious incantation to '*sprich zu mir in Seuchensprache'* ['speak to me in plague language'], an impatient, childish longing to 'see the cadavers dancing' (*Vanadium-i-ching,* 1983) for the apocalypse and for a world not chained by numbers and letters. [345] Bargeld's more recent, bird-like, almost lyrical scream seems to reflect and comment on the human condition from a position of hope and anxiety with an intention similar to that expressed by Viola (on *Anthem*'s scream) as 'an attempt at integration, interpretation and penetration of this place and this culture' (Violette, 1995, p.119).

Phil Minton (www.sofamusic.no) [346]

[345] This positiveness inherent in Neubauten's music has been stated many times and because of the close ties with Artaud, it can be effectively summed up by Derrida: 'Artaud does not call for destruction, for a new manifestation of negativity. Despite everything that it must ravage in its wake, the theatre of cruelty is not the symbol of an absent void. It **affirms**, it produces affirmation itself in its full and necessary rigor*'* (1978, p.232).

[346] Obviously, Bargeld is not the only contemporary musical performer to use the scream; several others from Yoko Ono to Mike Patton and Dave Phillips (and those referred to previously) who have all effectively employed screaming as a performative technique. Two pictured above (both of whom have worked with members of Neubauten), act as representatives of the untrained artist and the classically trained one: Phil Minton and Diamanda Galas both juxtapose more mainstream song structuring with a range of extreme vocalisations and experimentations which take their work out of the 'comfort zone' of listening. For example, Minton works with his 'Feral choirs' of (untrained) workshoppers in improvised vocal exploration. Galas created Artaudian ritual Schrei-oper performances which she called 'interveinal song- straight from the bloodstream' in C.Carr, *On Edge,* New England: Wesleyan University Press.1993, p.187.

3: Blixa Screaming

Ich kam vom Schreien zum Singen

(Bargeld, *Sounds*, 2.81, NBOA, accessed 10 November 2006).

Bargeld is self-taught; he learnt much about manipulating his voice from reading and listening to Artaud, working with practitioners such as Ruth Berghaus, Heiner Müller, Peter Zadek and Diamanda Galas, from earlier German performance styles such as Dadaism, sprechstimme, cabaret and from contemporary ideas influenced by non-Western practices as outlined in Chapter 7. His exceptionally powerful physique obviously is also an advantage as is his own insatiable curiosity about, and willingness to experiment with form.

When I posed the very obvious question - 'Why do you scream in performance?' Bargeld (email communication 24 January 2006) explained that:

> It came natural (and at first, before the singing really) I just worked on the more breathtaking aspects a bit. I came from a household where screaming was a daily reality. My father's typical comment would be, *'Ich schreie nicht, ich rede nur laut'* [I don't yell, I just talk loud]. Also contributing to my voice development is the fact of working with small PA systems and/or a too loud band for a normal voice.

The experimentation in Kreuzberg and Schöneberg in the 1980s tended to be site-specific (see Chapters 4 and 6) hence, as Bargeld explained, in wanting to explore new tonal territories, the scream was in competition and

cooperation with urban noises from traffic, machinery, supermarkets, building sites and street riots.The early screams were interwoven with the topography of the city and the affirmative incitement of the apocalypse. *Halber Mensch* (1985, VHS) depicts an effective example of this early theatricality - the scream competing with and complementing a specific location. Bargeld strides repetitively around the site of the ruined ironworks hangar as he *squeezes* [347] the scream; he bends double with the physical exertion, against a frame of raging fire and beaten metal. In *Der Tod ist ein Dandy* ['Death is a dandy'] on the same video, the scream is meshed into the screech of metal grinding on metal as machines pump, turn, penetrate, interlock, revolve (as in Viola's *Anthem*). Here the scream becomes part of this ruined scenery; it cracks and *cuts* the walls, bringing about the desired collapse. In *Liebeslieder* (1993, VHS) Bargeld begins the scream for *Armenia* on his knees; he *presses* up with its surge, to complete the expulsion of sound, and then sinks down. The effect of this action (under precise cross beams of white light) gives the piece a dramatic impact beyond that found in Armenia's brief Artaudian, surreal text. The scream in *Wüste (Liedeslieder)* also creates theatricality but through stillness. Amidst Unruh's play with a bowl of fire, Einheit's amplified sand which he repeatedly gathers and discharges down a gulley and Chung's swinging microphone leads, a motionless Bargeld *wrings* back his scream into a screeched whisper; his isolated stillness is echoed in the scream which he never allows to escape - recalling those silent, roaring screams previously mentioned in art, theatre and film. The opening of *Sehnsucht* on *Seele Brennt* (*Seele brennt/Nihil*, (dir.) Beetz and Schüppel, Berlin, goodmovies, 2006,

[347] Laban's descriptors are indicated by the use of italics; these are taken from the chart found on page 105 of Newlove (1998).

DVD) provides a further example of Bargeld's physicalising the effort of producing the scream; he places a hand on the top of his head as if to *thrust* the hoarse, cracking noise out of his mouth; his body *presses* down in this effort to expel what appears to be stuck in the throat.

One of the many effective aural effects which Bargeld's scream can encompass is his use of a quasi-musical scale. This can be either melancholic or elevating. It can be separate from the centre of the work, as in *U-Haft Muzak* (1981) or it can be part of the soundscape as for example, in *Ein Seltener Vogel* (2004) where the scaling scream weaves into the climatic metallic instrumentation. The scaling scream is also present in *Sie lächelt* from *Grundstück* (2005 DVD) which begins as an incantatory collage of voices; the Social Choir provide one strand by intoning an 'O' while Bargeld's text dissolves into throat croaks and clicks and eventually becomes a scream interwoven into the repeated '*es ist fadenscheinig'* ['it is threadbare']. Hence, Neubauten's orchestration of sound and scream has a textuality and musicality which not only (as previously noted) bears little relation to the Punk/Industrial shock-motivated yell but also is never as extreme or as unnerving as the deliberately uncomfortable vocalisations (as if in intense pain) of choking, gasping and vomiting created by Dave Phillips (of Schimpfluch and Ohne).

In recent work, for example, the *Musterhaus* experiments of 2005-7, Bargeld's scream often reverts to being part of an instrumental sound collage as in early days of *Kollaps* or *Stahlmusik*; it then recalls Artaud's screams on *Pour en*

finir. Although mostly missing from *Silence is Sexy* (2000) the scream is still present on another public work, *Perpetuum Mobile* (2004). On the title track, an extended scream becomes part of the surging *glide* and *jerk* of travel, arrival and departure; the use of the repeat and blend here echo some of the *Rede* which frequently features the instantly treated scream as part of layers of improvised non-phonemes, assonance and arrhythmic sound.

Although present, as already noted, on A*lles Wieder Offen* (2007) the scream tends not to be a central feature but more a deliberately forestalled surprise or belated eruption. Its late appearance on *Unvollständigkeit* and its rasping manifestation *punched* amidst smashing glass on *Birth, Lunch and Death* are effective examples of this. However, at the Sónar Festival, (Barcelona, June 2007) Bargeld's non-verbal improvising included an unremitting, exhilarating whirlpooling scream which began as a low growl that steadily intensified and *stretched.*

Bargeld performing with FM3 at the Sónar Festival 14.06.07
(Photograph taken by author)

This forty-five minute performance reaffirmed the scream's ongoing effectiveness as one of Bargeld's most powerful vocal strategies, but it also marked its long-held position as part of the overall texture of the music, especially as Bargeld remained partially obscured upstage giving the main space to FM3 as the key performers.[348]

Bargeld's use of the scream in his direction of J.M. Coetzee's *Warten auf die Barbaren* (Salzburg, 2005, Hamburg, 2006) was very different. It formed part of a recorded toncollage of voices and sounds which played a vital role in his mise-en-scene, by representing the bodiless tongues of the tortured and the torturer - those who spoke of history's traces and its future ruins. Bargeld's treated screams were 'spatialised' (to borrow a term from Emil Hrvatin, 1997, p.83), for despite their disembodiment, they were co-ordinated within the stage's stark white, empty space.

This was partly due to the fact that Bargeld's recorded (*slashing, whipping*) scream was employed in conjunction with the knife-like, flash bulb sequences created by Neubauten's lighting designer Lutz John. This synchronisation of sound and light was so precise that it formed a cutting away visually and aurally, which could be both sudden and yet sustained in its impact on the senses. The scream exploded without warning into the space and then, equally suddenly ended by being seemingly sucked inwards; the effect

[348] Bargeld acknowledges that, at a rock venue, his scream will bring the press cameras flashing (to capture his dramatic body language) and his audience applauding.

created was of a tangible noise. The scream was the absence, the gap between the relief of the darkness and the torture of the over-exposed white lighting which constantly captured Thieme's interpretation of Coetzee's Magistrate as an inept, bumbling figure. The silences which followed these sequences roared as loudly as Mother Courage's and Potemkin's nurse's impotence. At times the scream was overlaid with hollow mantras and cruel laughter from Jol's and Mandel's (the Magistrate's torturers) taped voices, suggesting the failure of languages used by these characters. The lone, connected voice was that of Hadewig Kras's Barbarian Girl and she spoke (live) only twice - in gibberish. *Warten auf die Barbaren* offers one of the few examples of Bargeld's screaming which did suggest the unspeakable extremity of human behaviour. It became a leitmotif for the production which aimed to examine otherness and the dichotomy of alleged barbarity and civilisation. In the Hamburg performances in particular, these screams were felt as a physical force; they interacted with the spectator's body and interpreted the space.

To conclude…

Artaud wrote in 1936 that 'the theatre needs desire, blind zest for life, capable of surpassing everything seen in every gesture or act' (1970, p.80); however, 'dance and consequently the theatre have not yet begun to exist' (Derrida, 1978, p.232). Desire (*sehnsucht*) and dance are still central concerns for Neubauten and feature strongly in the recent *Alles Wieder Offen*:

> machs am besten noch während ich tanze

ich tanze

ich tanze

du atmest wie ein funke, ohne körper mitten in mir

sehnsucht ist die einzige energie

['best you do it while I'm still dancing

still dancing

still dancing

you breathe like a spark incorporeal inside me

addiction to desire is the only energy': *Von Wegen*]

Grundstück – public performance 05.11.04 (Photograph taken by author)

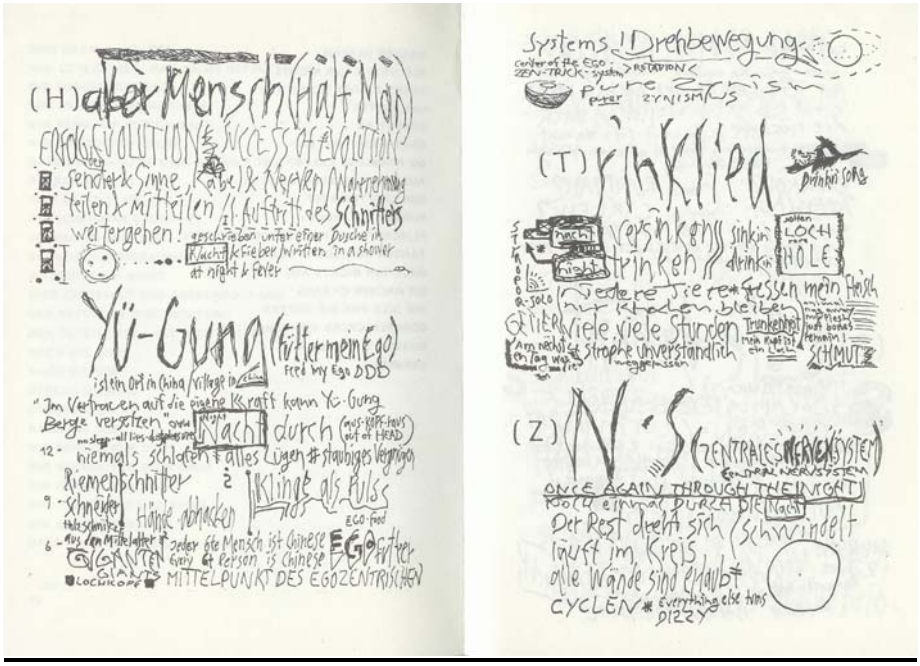
I conclude these four Chapters which have discussed Neubauten's musical strategies *against* the conventional/commercial performance as evidence of their 'destructive characters', with a return to dance. It is a vital thread which runs through their work as the dance of bodies (both Artaudian and Nietzschean), a dance with found, refunctioned objects (Benjamin), with sites and troupes (Cage) and of the unchained voice as pursued by those wishing to break the bonds of Western semantics (see Chapter 7). For Artaud (and

Butoh) dance is synonymous with the vibration field of the scream (hence, the effectiveness of assessing Bargeld's screams through Laban's dance qualities). The scream remains one of Neubauten's significant trademarks and despite its connotations of amateurism (as with the earlier squatter music), it has become a skilled, demanding act which relates to Artaud's rigour and discipline and Barthes' grain. Bargeld's screams are the solo dances of the text, eagerly anticipated in performance by the spectator (and critic) as the high points of the dance (the endless pirouette or giant leap) and of extreme effort, energy, risk and excitement, representing both the elusive German word *sehnsucht* and Artaud's long-awaited theatre of the future. They are music; they are not (as with the body – Chapter 7) akin to the work of such artists as Schimpfluch Gruppe whose Viennese Aktion approach can create extreme vocalisations, closer to therapy and ritual and designed to test the limits of the recipient.[349]

The final strategy *against* examines Neubauten's texts for influences, structuring and narratives and once again, Artaud's proposals are paramount – in this case these are for texts which examine 'man organically through anarchic destruction' (1970, p.71).

[349] See Drew Daniel, *Aktion time vision* in *The Wire*, January 2003, pp.20-25.

Chapter Nine: **STRATEGIEN GEGEN den Text**



Texts from *Stimme frißt Feuer,* 1988, with permission to use(Merve Verlag, Berlin)

I still remember really wishing that I could speak German simply because I knew that the words were important. Even as an American, it was totally obvious to me that his lyrics and the music were a symbiosis

(Arto Lindsay: Dax, 2006, p.302).

Introduction

Neubauten's texts as presented by Bargeld's voice whether non-linguistic or literary, are as Lindsay states in the above quotation, inextricably woven into the fabric of the noise; however, in this final chapter (which continues to examine Neubauten's destructive, collapsing musical strategies) the two are necessarily separated. This is in order to look closely at the Artaudian elements of the lyrics and the central influence of Heiner Müller, both in

Bargeld's approach to the writing and the content. In terms of the latter, I attempt to tease out some of the multi-layered themes of the texts by utilising a Berlin throughline. The importance of the city has already been stressed in Chapters 1 and 4 (in particular, Maeck's observation used as a title citation for Chapter 4); furthermore, Bargeld has made the centrality of his city very clear by stating: 'You could say it is possible to trace Berlin's recent history through our work' (interview with author 5 November 2004). As the theme of Berlin is extensive, I have subdivided this section into four broad porous themes; Squatter music (as Berlin 'street' work of the early eighties); the Body (Artaudian human and the State) and Journeys (in landscapes of Müller); the Interim and Science, and Bird's-eyed music and the new Berlin. The work is also threaded through with the dance motif (as discussed at the end of Chapter 8) which extends from Neubauten's very first work, *Für den Untergang* (1980):

Tanze regungslos
tanz nicht für Sonne
tanz nicht für Regen
einzig und allein
allein dafür
für euren untergang

['Dance motionless
dance not for sun
dance not for rain

solo and alone

alone for

for your ruin']

to the previously mentioned *Von Wegen* (2007). The final section (which also works as a conclusion) discusses the texts of Neubauten's last album to date, *Alles Wieder Offen.*

Even a cursory look at Neubauten's texts discloses the omission of popular music's usual romantic concerns and personal moods and Artaud's avoidance of 'psychological conflicts […] and battlefields of moral passions' (Corti, 1970, p.266).[350] An attractive concept for many young West German *Nachgeborenen* was the apocalypse (see Chapter 1) as a response to the past and as a way out of the current society. Anton Kaes (Malkin, 1999, p.34) described this as: 'Does this not express Germany's sub-conscious wish to eradicate its traumatic past once and for all […] to begin once more, to create a pure moment of origin that is not contaminated by history.' Hence, it is not difficult to understand the appeal of writers like Benjamin and in particular, Artaud. Indeed Bargeld read his copy of *The Theatre and its Double* amongst the bomb sites, abandoned buildings and bullet-pocked walls of the precariously balanced West Berlin.[351]

[350] Hence it is of immediate interest to note that Bargeld (*The Wire,* October 1996, p.21) has described Neubauten's songs as love songs; 'The only thing that raises the human being higher than other animals is love and that has always been an element of what we're doing. We always referred to what we're doing as love songs.' However, he clarifies this with the comment that if a song's content was not lovesickness then the work was invariably deemed political.

[351] In the early 1980s Jaz Coleman of the English post-punk band, Killing Joke claimed the imminent approach of the apocalypse, stating that Killing Joke's music was the 'warning sounds for an age of self-destruction.' Coleman believed that a 'new, brutally instinct-attuned

Neubauten's early improvised, apocalyptic texts gradually matured into more complex, metaphysical writings in an ongoing examination of late 20th century/new Millennium mankind as Bargeld developed his *wortspiel* and his *träumtexte*. As the lyrics became more intricate, other themes emerged; for example, *Kosmische* music's concept of journeying found its way into Neubauten's texts as a fractured, fraught, weighty and often lonely experience (hence, more NEU! than Kraftwerk). The pursuit of a social utopia through music's inclusive possibilities has also become a frequent theme which is often expressed through the word *Möglichkeit* ['possibility'] perhaps as an adaptation of Herman Hesse's observation that to achieve the possible one must constantly demand the impossible.[352] However, it would be incorrect to suggest that only the later texts (coupled with the growing predominance of air-motivated sound objects) have spirituality or a social usefulness. Even in the most painful via negativa - scraping, screaming metal onslaughts and sparse words of the early eighties - Neubauten's sound was about denying music in order to find it in everything. The incitement of disease, destruction and burning (as outlined in Chapter 1) was always for a new beginning and the *neue Lied*. [353]

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uncivilisation would emerge phoenix like from the smoking ruins'. Fire was also their main stage symbol; they even recruited a fire-eater – 'to kindle the will power within people' (Reynolds, 2005, pp.434-5).

[352] Interpreting *Möglichkeit* remains difficult: 'This longing, this...yearning…something (Neubauten) have striven for that's still out of reach. You can't put it into words. 'Desire' would be a cliché here, perhaps for a lost homeland or as a reaction against the immeasurable loneliness of living in future times' (Fadele D. New Musical Express, September 1987, NBOA sourced 11 October 2006).

[353] The reference is to Grotowski's theatre rehearsal exercise, *via negativa,* which is used in the same way, as a ridding, a stripping away, going backwards, in order to move forwards. The new song refers to *Ein Seltener Vogel, Bunkerversion*, 2004, a supporter-encouraged work.

1: Heiner Müller

> There's no more utopia, there's no more sense, there's no more meaning, nothing but this vacuum, this empty space. One does not know where to move in this empty space, how one should move, which direction makes sense. Therefore one plays. Out of that, play comes into being
>
> (Müller in Kalb, 1998, p.168).

The centrality of the East German writer, Heiner Müller (1929-95) in any study of Neubauten's texts cannot be overlooked. Bargeld has spoken of Müller in terms of a mentor/father-figure, citing his pleasure in their frequent talks at the Schiffbauerdamm, where Müller was a member of the directorate (1992-95), and the writer's East Berlin home. Müller and Neubauten not only worked together but the playwright exerted a strong literary influence on Bargeld's writing in structure, stimuli and content, hence, before the collaborations are discussed there is some explanation of those aspects of Müller as a writer which have a direct bearing on Neubauten. [354]

Müller coined the phrase *Verschleierung* ['a veiling'] to describe his own deliberately obscure writing style. Each of his works builds through fragmentation and obsessive images; there are contradictory, ambiguous pronouns, multiple voices, blocks of unattributed text and fluid stage directions which fail to signify time and place. The result is a theatre of bodiless voices

[354] Müller and Bargeld also shared an admiration for Beuys and Brecht's *Lehrstücke*. However, Bargeld has expressed an ambivalent attitude toward Brecht - not selecting him as one of his 144 guests on the roof. This might be partially related to a refusal by the Brecht estate for him to insert his own music into a proposed production of *Caucasian Chalk Circle* with Ruth Berghaus.

akin to Beckett, described as *Kopftheater* ['theatre in the head'] by Bargeld (1997, p.256) or borderless *Bewusstseinslandschaften* ['landscapes of consciousness'] as analysed by Jeanette Malkin in *Memory-Theater: Post-Modern Drama* (1999, pp.72-3). The image of a hostile landscape permeates Müller's writings, both thematically and structurally (see section 4 below). Neubauten had sought such abject places as performance sites, described them with their sounds (from *Patienten OT* to *Berlin Babylon),* in their texts (*Sie, Die Befindlichkeit des Landes)* and even used them as a means to structuring work (e.g. Bargeld discussed *Halber Mensch* and *Sie* as maps: *Headcleaner,* 1997, p.55).

Bargeld & Heiner Müller, videoclip from *Liebeslieder* (Maeck & Schenkel, 1993, VHS)

Although Müller is probably best understood through Brecht, especially with his adaptations of the *Lehrstücke*,[355] it was not Brecht's *Aufklärung* ['enlightenment'] or dialectics which he found relevant. Müller preferred to

[355] Jonathan Kalb also sees traces of Kleist, Mayakovsky, Genet, Shakespeare, Beckett, and in particular, Artaud in Müller's work, who Müller felt had forced a 'very productive disturbance' (in denigrating rationality) onto the European Left and its theatre (1998, p.105).

flood the viewer/reader with far more than s/he could grasp at any given moment (what he called *Überschwemmung*: Malkin, 1999, p.31). Hence, as with his radio adaptation of the *Fatzer Fragment* in 1987, he neutralized the forward progression of the 'learning piece' while maintaining Brecht's emphasis on incompleteness, error and process (expressed by him in the *Fatzer Fragment*, 127 as: 'I, the writer, don't have to finish something. It is enough that I instruct myself. I am only leading the examination and it is my method which can be examined by the audience'*).* Despite these shared concerns, there remained substantial differences between the writers. [356] While Brecht had striven for direct action against economic injustice within a rational framework, Müller's labyrinthine language fixed on the ruination of history, memory and betrayal through multiple codings which suggest ambivalence toward the future.[357] This dense style was further enhanced by Müller's use of dream-inspired series of independent yet associative images:

> The story telling in dreams seems to Müller to be one of the purest forms possible - missing links between gesture, the absence of the illusion of meaning, the defiance of chronology, the bringing together of place, people, lifetimes without obvious reasons (Von Henning, 1995, pp. xi, xv).

[356] Von Henning (1995, p. xiii) says that Müller managed 'to bring together two seemingly opposite poles of the theatre spectrum, Artaud and Brecht, in what I would term 'primitive fusion'- alienation (more accurately, 'dislocation') taken onto another plane, and there combined with a visceral appeal to the senses as well as/before the intellect.' Loren Kruger also notes in her excellent critique of Müller's radio version of Brecht's Fazter-*Broadcasting (a)socialism*- there was a shared interest in abolishing the divide of player and spectator to make a statesman out of every spectator (2004, p.143). This desire for the active, empowered listener is a frequent theme in this study - see Chapter 10.

[357] In his Kleist prize speech, 1990, Müller quoted from *Fatzer*- 'just as ghosts came before out of the past/so now likewise out of the future' (NBOA, sourced 25 November 2006).

Träumtexte, Müller claimed, enabled a text to contain knowledge that the author was not aware of during the act of writing. He argued that this fusion of the writer's conscious and unconscious memory broke up any flow and ripped 'the reader/audience out of the comfort of predictability' (Von Henning, 1995, p. xv). Dreams as a stimulus, the use of the language of dreams and the insertion of dreams into texts in order to fracture the flow are frequently used by Neubauten (for example, in *Headcleaner, Stella Maris* and *Jewels*). Bargeld regards this material as spontaneous and unpredictable and hence, records and stores such material for future artistic use.

Another important point of contact is Müller's comment that artworks need to be quiet in order to exercise their destructive power (Kalb, 1998, p.208); this is echoed in Neubauten's juxtaposition of cacophonic noise and silence, the hardly audible whisper and the raw scream (see Chapter 7). Both Müller and Neubauten share a fascination with the intelligent mistake. Both believed that *der Fehler* can facilitate change or at least, escape. Part of Müller's autobiography is entitled *Collected Errors*. Neubauten subtitled *Strategien gegen Architektur 3*, *A Comedy of Errors* and Bargeld introduced the Supporters Phase Three web cast (February 2006) with 'here we are ready to make mistakes again.' [358]

The collaborations with Müller had a profound effect on Neubauten's development during the 1990s and resulted in several extraordinary pieces of

[358] Frequent reference has been made to the foregrounding of error – see in particular, the opening Prologue and Chapter 7:1 as well as the following discussion on *Bildbeschreibung.*

music. They also deepened Bargeld's understanding of theatre as a performer, writer and director - the influence of which could be seen in his direction of *Warten auf die Barbaren* (2005/06) and in his lyric writing from *Tabula Rasa* onwards. Hence the following section now discusses Neubauten's and Müller's collaborative radio and theatre work as an important precursor to understanding both Neubauten's texts and the band's subsequent progress.

2: Müllerarbeit

Müller initiated the first project with Neubauten in 1988 and during his lifetime there were four more, plus other unfulfilled proposals based on Artaud's and Jean Paul's writings. He also helped to organise and introduced Neubauten's first East Berlin concert in December 1989 (see Schueppel's *Von Wegen,* 2009*).* The completed works include two radio plays: *Bildbeschreibung* (1988) and *Hamletmaschine* (1990) for Berliner Rundfunk, and the use of tracks from the first two albums for *Fatzer* (1987).[359] The score which Neubauten composed for *Bildbeschreibung* was reworked to underscore Müller's eight hour staging of *Hamlet/Hamletmaschine* at the Deutsches Schauspielhaus in 1989. During this production Neubauten met the theatre designer Erich Wonder and were subsequently invited to compose for, and participate in, his performance event in Vienna, *Das Auge des Taifun* (1992), staged with Müller's dramaturgical advice. These musical collaborations, despite resulting

[359] The East German *Deutsche Rundfunk Archiv* (DRA) in Potsdam provided recordings of these three works for this research; however, there is also a recording of *Hamletmaschine* on Ego, an independent label set up by Neubauten in 1991 as an outlet for its projects, both collective and individual, which no major recording label would consider commercially viable.

in some of Neubauten's most remarkable work, have received scant attention apart from a paper by Andrew Spencer of Ohio State University's German Department (for the 1998 Bath Symposium on *Heiner Müller: Probleme und Perspektiven*) entitled *Kopfarbeit or Theatre in your Head* (Rodopi: 2000) [360] and a few references in Loren Kruger's chapter on *Fatzer im Radio* in her *Post-Imperial Brecht* (Cambridge, 2004).

The first cooperative enterprise, *Fatzer im Radio,* (adapted by Müller for Berliner Rundfunk and performed with friends such as Frank Castorf and Johanna Schall) was as previously stated, the Brecht fragment, *Der Untergang des egoisten Fatzer.* It was recorded in 1987 and broadcast for Brecht's 90th anniversary in February 1989. Matthias Thalheim, the dramaturg and assistant director of the Rundfunk, is quoted by Spencer as saying that in discussions on the choice of music, Müller suggested Neubauten because he knew Bargeld through the Merve Verlag publishers and had cassette recordings of *Kollaps* and *Patienten OT.* He also believed that Neubauten's '*Musik- Mörtel'* with its 'groben rohen Blöcke' ['mortar-music with coarse raw blocks'] would roughen up the language of Brecht's discourse (2000, p.211). In her analysis of this *Hörspiel* ['radio play'] in *Post-Imperial Brecht* (2004), Kruger assesses (Ibid., p.139) the production as very radical, asocial and utopian as implied in Brecht's final words which Müller, himself, read: 'The state is not finished/allow us to change it/ according to the conditions of our

[360] Here Spencer argues that in working with Müller, Neubauten created their own brand of *musical* theatre (he includes theatrical songs too, such as *Headcleaner* and *Sie*) which overcame the stilted style of their previous experience in *Andi* (2000, p.219). Spencer's paper also focuses on Müller's metaphor of *die Fehler* and references this to Neubauten's work. He quotes Müller saying that 'the only hope is in error because when all the technological systems work- we are lost' (2000, p.208).

lives…may the order of things please you, regulator/the state no longer needs you/hand it over!' The stylised flattened delivery was punctuated by Neubauten's 'patterned industrial noise and concatenation of sound*'* (Ibid., p.156) which Kruger (Ibid., p.154) judges brings out what is lurking in Brecht's text– the challenge to the history-makers' authority. She describes their music as creating the effect of disillusioning and distancing – 'it holds the hearer at bay and defers the apparently natural feeling of being encompassed' (here Kruger references Adorno and Eisler on film music, 1947); she argues that although Neubauten's music could be naturalised as battle noise 'its abstract minimalism keeps it at one remove from the mimetic' (Ibid., pp.156-7).[361]

Müller's initial use of *Kollaps* and *Patienten OT* resulted in Neubauten's composing and playing for Müller's 38 minute dramatic work, *Bildbeschreibung* (written in 1981 and produced in 1988 for Berliner Rundfunk with Bargeld narrating the capitalised sections of the text). Müller said that it was '*eine Landschaft jenseits des Todes'* ['a landscape beyond death'] and that 'the action goes anyway you like, since the consequences are past, explosion of a memory in an extinct dramatic structure' *(*NBOA, sourced 25 November 2006*).*[362] There is an abbreviated version (9.5 minutes) on *Strategien gegen Architektur 11* (1991) and Spencer's description of this is

[361] Kruger makes some further interesting judgments on the appropriateness of Neubauten's contribution; she (2004, p.139) interprets Einstürzende Neubauten as 'Imploding Prefabs' (see Chapter 1:1, *Architekur ist/und Geiselnahme*) and says that this recalls the distinctive GDR modern style of post-war housing blocks. Hence the work 'heralds the future, not only through East/West collaboration but also in the deployment of a relatively low-tech and low-profile medium, rather than the dominant institution of television, to realise the drama of the collapsing state.'

[362] This again highlights the shared interest in landscape mentioned above both as an alienated space and as *Platz schaffen* (ready for a different kind of Neubauten).

worth quoting in full, partly because of its reference to *Die genaue Zeit* and the error:

> Only those fragments of text (are) spoken by Bargeld, which appear on the page in capital letters, in addition to the phrases, 'Mann gegen Vogel und Frau, Frau gegen Vogel und Mann, Vogel gegen Frau und Mann' (which) are spoken and immediately repeated. In this form the verbal clues which are present are so few and far between that the 'description' is almost entirely musical. The first third of the piece is a subdued, shifting, eerily echoing soundscape punctured by rattling metallic percussion. After the phrase ALLES GESEHEN a one note bass line establishes dominance and, as the sun (or suns) of the text bears down relentlessly through to the end. As in the song Die genaue Zeit, the one glimmer of hope in this atrophied tableau of crushing repetition, the possibility of an error (FEHLER) is suggested by the sound of the stylus skipping across the album. The final two minutes produce an intensification of desperation as Bargeld repeats 'Ich' over a mounting musical crescendo, which eventually falls, only to clatter back to life for the twenty seconds following the speaker's intoning of the last line 'Ich- der gefrorene Sturm (2000, p.211).

The full recording (provided by DRA, January 2007) sustains and elaborates on Spencer's description; the music rumbles, creaks and groans under the careful, dispassionate voices resulting in a harsh, unrelenting work. Particularly effective is the opening sequence of unnervingly ambiguous bird

cries which underscore the repetition of the title and writer's name until this repetition becomes an error.

The *Wende* held up any further cooperation as East German Radio was reorganised but, in 1990, Wolfgang Rindfleisch (who had also worked on *Fatzer*) co-directed Müller's *Hamletmaschine* with Bargeld. In this 32 minute radio version there were four actors; Bargeld as Hamlet/Actor, Gudrun Gut as Ophelia, Hans-Werner Krösinger reading the intertitles and Müller himself reading the stage directions. Bargeld declaims Hamlet's text as if speaking an unfamiliar language, which creates an alienating, robotic effect whereas Gut's vulnerable, overtly feminine voice heightens the ghastly content of her monologues - thus effectively polarising the two roles. The effect is further enhanced by the fast editing to eliminate breathing space, the use of multiple voices, drones, scratches, scrapes, falling debris and strangulated screams. The result is indeed a landscape of 'petrified hope' (Carl Weber's description of the text, 1984, p.50). Bargeld employed many of these techniques later, in his direction of the taped voices and screams in *Warten auf die Barbaren* (2005).[363]

The next collaboration was Erich Wonder's *Das Auge des Taifun* in 1992, an inaugural event for the 300th anniversary of Vienna's Akademie der Künste. The idea for the staging originated with Müller's familiar expression of '*ein Reiseführer durch die Landschaften jenseits des Todes'* ['a journey through a landscape beyond death'] in a 1986 letter to Wonder. By 1991 it had become:

[363] Spencer also points out that that these works, and others recorded by Ego, helped to radicalise radio drama, as well as continuing to confuse the musical critical world about Neubauten's 'category'.

> First movement- the monolith/time's floodgate/the dream of the expedition to the South Pole/the sawing up of the astronaut/torches on the landing strip/Second Movement- the unicorn/Third movement/the sun melts in the mouth/Second stop blanket bombing of Bagdad/Fourth movement/the chameleon's fire/burning car/Fifth movement/extinguishing all that has been seen (Maeck, 1996, p.122).

Originally Müller was to write the text but, apart from providing source material, suggestions and some editing, eventually he left it to Bargeld to create the *neun Bildern*.[364] The performance was undertaken by Neubauten on a mobile stage capped by a glass coffin described by Bargeld as a:

> Kind of phallic steel frame erected on a truck. The whole thing was enclosed by 40 meters of semi-transparent glass walls. Inside - that is in the 'cock-pit' and in the 'bowels'- there was enough space for the band to play. From the outside, the band was only recognizable as silhouettes (Maeck, 1996, p.122).

Flanked on either side by snow-drenched huskies pulling on a treadmill against wind machines, it travelled down the Austrian capital's Ringstrasse to the Opera House, encountering a variety of beings – a giant astronaut, sheets of smashing glass, a bride on a white Viennese stallion complete with unicorn horn, a burning figure and truck - before returning to its original hangar.

. [364] Bargeld summarised Müller's advice as- 'you have a look at that and yeah, it's good like that' (interview with author 5 November 2004).

Bargeld stood at the eyes of the glass cocoon, declaiming the texts while Unruh, Einheit, Hacke and Chung played their sound-objects and instruments around him in the confined capsule. The event (VHS by Paulus Marker, 1994: NBOA master copy) has overtones of a carnival spectacle captured in *Theater Heute (*July 1992, p.58 NBOA sourced 15 February 2007)'s headline – 'Blixa im Wonder-land.' The experience was useful for Neubauten in that it initiated two seminal works, *Headcleaner* and *Sie*, both on *Tabula Rasa* (1993). Following these experiments, Neubauten returned to the 'musical' stage with *Faust: Mein Brustkorb; Mein Helm*, 1994 (Werner Schwab/Thomas Thieme). Bargeld performed the role of Mephisto, with the group composing, inventing and playing on stage in Potsdam at Hans Otto-Theater for each performance (see Chapter 6:3 *Interesting Corners and Sites*). The group moved from tackling Müller's missing stage directions or ones which blended into the spoken logos of his theatre-in-the-head and abject landscapes, to attempting to perform as music Schwab's explicit but unplayable stage directions confined within playable book machines and library interiors.

With Müller's death at the end of 1995, this experimental radio/theatre work came to an end.[365] However, Bargeld has pursued aspects of the work through stage collaborations with Thomas Thieme [366] and his speech work (e.g. *Rede* and *The Execution of Precious Memories*), but most importantly for this study, there is Müller's ongoing influence on Neubauten's lyric writing.

[365] Einheit, on leaving Neubauten, has pursued his interest in creating sound for the radio and theatre. Hacke has composed music for films and engaged in this medium as a research tool for diverse musical cultures, e.g. Fatih Akin's *Gegen die Wand* (2004) and *Crossing the Bridge* (2006).

[366] Thieme directed Bargeld as Eckart in *Baal* at the Deutschen Nationaltheater in Weimar, December 2002 and was directed by Bargeld in the role of the Magistrate in *Warten auf die Barbaren,* 2005/2006.

3: Das Strukturieren

the structuring

Bargeld says that he sees writing the lyrics for each song as a problem which could be solved in many different ways according to his given circumstances; he called writing the *Alles Wieder Offen* lyrics 'shedding weight*'* and said that they are his most personal to date (interview with author 14 June 2007). Although now he is always credited as the lyricist, in the first years, he (Maeck, 1982, p.112) disclaimed any sense of himself as the writer:

> Quatsch, ich hab noch nie'nen Text geschrieben, wie kannst du so was sagen? Ich singe sie. Und wenn sie gut sind, schrieb ich sie hinterher auf. Das ist alles.
>
> ['Rubbish, I have never written the texts. How can you say this? I sing them. And if they are good, I write them afterwards. That is all'.]

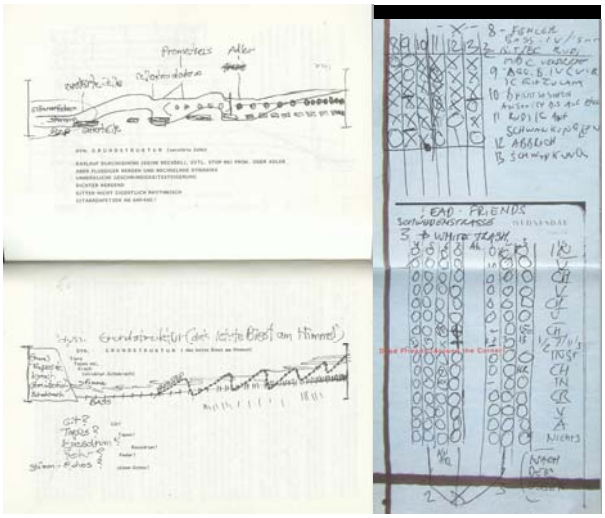
This was because the texts, like the sound, were improvised and consisted of free association, drug-fuelled, spontaneous lyrics created around an agreed idea within the group. Bargeld explained: 'Neither my early lyrics nor most of my lyrics would I want to call autobiographical. It was all improvised. The music on stage was improvisation. The lyrics were evolved from the singing. The singing was improvisation' (Dax, 2004, pp.10-11).

However, Bargeld felt that improvisation became problematic with *Patienten OT:* 'I felt like I'd lost my soul. For some reason it suddenly didn't work anymore' (Dax, 2005, p.90). So for *Halber Mensch* (1986) he began, with the encouragement of Mute producer Gareth Jones, to organise words more structurally. Hence, these texts were the first to evolve outside improvisation with the title song, *Halber Mensch* (acapella for a male and female choir) being written on small cards which were then arranged into columns.[367]

Bargeld also speaks of learning about the connection between structure and the statement of the song while working on *Kicking against the Pricks* with Nick Cave in 1985. The detailed pre-recording analysis of each lyric gave Bargeld many pointers for his own writing. However, Bargeld has stressed that 'I was more influenced by the Heiner Müller way of writing […] Nick's way is very Anglo-American and very conventional. What Heiner Müller wrote hasn't got anything to do with songs and hasn't got anything to do with conventional writing either […] he used to take little pieces from the newspaper, put it on a scriptboard and suddenly things got together at one point ending up in a complete thing. Very unconventional and very unromantic in a way' (unattributed interview, NBOA, sourced 25 November 2006). Despite such structures, the writing of Neubauten lyrics always comes after the music which often develops from where the last work finished or with a piece of concert improvisation (called by the group -die *Rampe*). Bargeld gradually

[367] Broadhurst offers a different interpretation on this move toward lyrics in citing Bargeld as saying that the group deliberately adopted a pop structure in order to collapse it from within (Broadhurst, 1999, p.16). Chris Bohn's interpretation of Bargeld's growing literacy was that, post 1989 with the resurgence of racism, Bargeld recoiled from the language he had been singing in but rather than retreat from his native tongue, he worked the language harder to include myth, metaphor and cosmos (2000, p.44).

finds textual solutions. [368] In *Träumfestival,* (Copenhagen, March 2003, NBOA VHS copy) he explained the process as a puzzle with lyrical ideas meshing with other ideas, until a pattern emerges. Much of the thinking goes on in his sleep: 'I don't ever write anything about anything….my thoughts find their way into the songs.' This has meant that, as at *Grundstück,* there are often pieces of music ready for performance with only a few incantatory phrases which are in the process of development and change (for example, *Nagorny Karabach).*



Bargeld's Notations- *Stimme frißt Feuer* (1988) & *Dead Friends* 2004, with permission to use

There is also always an element of improvisation with key phrases signalling points in the playing where Bargeld can experiment with different words or elaborate on the subject within agreed musical and temporal boundaries. For Bargeld 'lyrics are expandable shapes, fixed points on a map which you can move in different ways' (Dax, 2005, p.176).

The other important ingredient in Bargeld's writing is his use of lists. In using strings of disassociated (rag-picked) words Bargeld says, 'I follow a

[368] Hence, the titles of works often bear no relationship to the textual content.

subconscious stream which doesn't make itself entirely aware in my thought processes' (Maeck, 1996, p.122). He explained the approach in the following manner:

> You could say that my thoughts are permeated by a fascination for serial structures. Lists of words […] in my laptop I have a list that I started on my first computer in 1993 and it continues today […] before the computer […] I had these A4 format folders full of papers […]
> I can access a lot of information and get a frame for a song in no time. I don't make notes specifically with a view to writing lyrics and those notes don't automatically become song lyrics. But it is good to know that all my words and lines are lingering about somewhere on my hard-disc and once a musical framework is set, I know that it will lead to something […] When I start working on lyrics I put all my findings that are relevant for a topic in a new document and print that […].
> Sometimes I listen to old live recordings where we have done something interesting improvising on stage (Dax, 2005, pp.204-205).

> The song *Compressors in the Dark* of the supporters' album came from such a list. I can't really explain why anymore but then I felt the urge to write down all German words with only one syllable. I ended up with lots of pages filled with columns. I read them out horizontally for the song (Ibid., pp. 10-11).[369]

[369] Broadhurst (1999, p.163) sees Bargeld's method as a blow for the death of the author and in support of a kind of post-structuralism inherent in his declaration that – 'For me it is just a provocation against individualism and the romantic notion of writing. As a person I always wanted to vanish behind the words to disintegrate.' Obviously there is the link to

Zinfert utilised Bargeld's interest in lists by inserting them into her adaptation of *Warten auf die Barbaren.* These recorded strings of evocative, descriptive words provided effective sound scenery, for example during the Magistrate's journey to return the Barbarian woman to her people. Zinfert (email correspondence with author 28 August 2005) explained that: 'the lists are material, sound material for Blixa to play with.'

The gathering and saving of words for future use remains a central approach to writing for Bargeld (as does Unruh's similar rag-picking scraps of metal, machinery and debris for future instruments). Word lists still feature in several songs on *Alles Wieder Offen* (2007); here they create verbal journeys through the body, cities and the cosmos; in performance, they are used to produce a sprechgesang theatricality in Bargeld's strong delivery (e.g. *Unvollständigkeit).*

Earlier evidence of Bargeld's fascination with linguistic structures can be found in *Ende Neu* (1996); in particular, as the motif for the disintegration and reconstruction of the group and the city in the album's title track. The title *Ende Neu* is created from the seven central letters of the group's name and suggest both the potential 'end' with the loss of two members and the 'rebirth' through gaining two new musicians.[370] This transformation is linked with the changing face of united Berlin which lost half a city, culture and history to

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(Punk)Dadaism, Surrealism, Burroughs and Gysin cut-ups as well as Artaud's (Müller)'s backlash against psychological language and delivery, and to Nietzsche's Übermensch-poet who was also recommended to work unconsciously.

[370] Chung and Einheit left during the recording of this album. Moser and Arbeit joined in 1997. A list of words from anagrams of the group's name forms the basis of the text.

rebuild and reinvent itself. The song uses a shrinking and reforming structure. This occurs with the use of consecutive, diminishing stanzas as the song sheds lines (from the aforementioned number of 7 to 6, 5, 3 and finally 1) and then instantly rebuilds itself into a final stanza of seven lines plus the title. [371]

Bargeld's magpie-like acquisition of literary references and dreams also developed as several texts, in particular, *Sie,* took on the inter-textuality of Müller's *flooding*. Multi-lingual terms, obscure titles (*Zebulon* or *Salamandria*), anachronisms (*Ubique Media Dämon),* fragmentation in place and time (*Die Interimsliebenden)* as well as scientific and mythological references began to feature regularly. However, Bargeld's fascination with polysemy is evident as early as 1987 with *Ich bin's* [372] *wh*ere, in a text littered with '*nihil'* and *'nichts'* the various readings are created by Bargeld's use of '*die reine Leere'* and '*die leere Menge.'* The first can mean a total emptiness, but can also mean a pure theoretical enquiry as Lehre (doctrine, theory*)* is pronounced the same. '*Die leere Menge'* is a vacuous set or group but inverted as '*Mengelehre',* it refers to revolutionary changes in the teaching of school mathematics in the 1970s. In this empty room the advice offered to the protagonist who is/has nothing ('*Schatten meiner selbst'* ['shadow of myself']) is to '*einen Besen zerhacken'* ['hack up a broom'] and '*Feuer anfachen'* ['ignite a fire']. The incendiary option is always present.[373] Bargeld's written structures (as seen in the publication of

[371] At this time too, Bargeld began his linguistic experiments for the Goethe Institute with *Die Vollstreckung Kostbärer Erinnerungen,* and his solo *Rede***;** both of these demonstrate strategies of play and chance in creating verbal structures in which Bargeld presents himself as the medium.
[372] The use of lists is in evidence as early as 1988: see *Stimme frißt Feuer.*
[373] However, in response to Harry Lachner's question concerning his fathoming the depths of semantics, Bargeld replied that 'from the point at which I start to work on something through to the point when it's recorded and mixed, a lot of time passes. During that time it's very hard for me to overlook all the dimensions words have' (1997, p.57).

Headcleaner, 1997) also illustrate typographically his performative use of montage, cyclical movement, interpolations, layers and holes (so evident in *Ich bin's)*. The columned layout and multiple voices of texts such as *Halber Mensch, Ich bin's, Sie* and *Schwindel* demonstrate the non-linear approach, splinter any attempt at meaning and create 'dervish dances of discourse' as expressed in a critique of *Headcleaner* in *Print Run* by Chris Sharp.[374]

I have aimed with the first three sections of this chapter, to provide a framework for the following textual analysis. The framework has emphasised the importance of Heiner Müller for Neubauten - his polysemic landscapes and writing approaches, and his influence on their own textual development and concerns. It is intended that the following five sections not only demonstrate the previously mentioned Berlin concerns of the group's work but also the predominance of Artaud's and Müller's (frequently cited as 'Artaudian') textual preferences and objectives.

4: THEMEN und TEXTE

> Neither Humour, Poetry or Imagination mean anything unless they re-examine man organically through anarchic destruction
>
> (Artaud in Corti, 1970, p.71).

As Neubauten, in conception and development, are firmly rooted in a Berlin which no longer exists, I shall preface the textual analysis with a further reference to the vital transitional Berlin work, the album, *Ende Neu.* This work

[374] *The Wire,* February 1998 is unavailable; the article was borrowed from NBOA, 25 November 2006.

captures much of the content of Neubauten's texts as it looks backwards and forwards and comments on the present state of Berlin. It recalls the hothouse labyrinth of the divided city's squatter protest music with its mantra to disobey (*Installation No. 1*) and its gleeful 'big bang, break-through, expansion' (*die Explosion im Festspielhaus);* it parodies Motorik music's alternative 'escapist' response on the autobahn with Motor Machine Music (*NNNAAAMMM*). It reflects on impossibility in love as the two halves of the lovers in *Stella Maris* constantly miss each other in their global and stellar travels, and on the impossibility of a democratic utopia in the choric *Was ist ist.* The slower, more ominous *Der Schacht von Babel* points to the 1990s' frenetic (re)building for commerce and memorial with its endless 'democratic' babel of international competitions, debates and controversies. This text also points back (and forward) to the need to have done with ivory towers for a more underground approach; it is time to leave one's elevated position/single world view – 'zu hoch war bis jetzt unser Aussichtspunkt' ['our viewpoint was too high before'].[375]

The creation of this pit/submerged tower also recalls some key anti-architectural strategies mentioned in Chapter 1:2b- An *angel's-eyed view of history*. For example, the Gerzs' now sunken tower – a 'reminder' against Fascism and War in Harburg-Hamburg, Horst Hoheisel's inverted anti-'memorial' Aschrott Jewish fountain in Kassel as well as Bargeld's suggested

[375] In discussing the song, Bargeld acknowledges Kakfa's *The Castle* as a stimulus – *'Ich will einen Gang graben. Es muß ein Fortschritt geschehen'* ['I want to dig a passage/pit. Progress must be made'] (Bargeld,1997, p.260). Bohn's vinyl sleeve notes (1996) suggests a different critique of the miners' blind resignation to endless burrowing which is foolishly fuelled by their misguided pride in the electricity supply which forces them to work even longer. The ten lines can be variously interpreted in the sense of Müller's 'flooding'.

shaft through the layers of Potsdamer Platz as a statement of impermanence.[376] The concept of 'Babel' is revisited with the frantically delivered choric *Was ist ist* which looks forward to a variety of personal and social wishes – if we can learn to listen to each other. In the title song, *Ende Neu,* Berlin, where '*einst neue Bauten […] eingestürz'* ['once new buildings […] collapsed'] is now an '*insel zu verschenken'* ['island to give away'] for it is 'up for grabs' as corporate competition for its development dominates the skyline. However, the song (and the album) does have a clearly expressed positiveness with its phoenix motif as a comment on Berlin's ability for re-birth (and by implication, the group's reincarnation too):

wir kennen uns schon langer
Der Phönix und ich

['we have known each other a long time,
the phoenix and I'].

Amidst the transience of these snapshots, hope is implied for the reunited city and the three remaining musicians through the power of dance:

wir tanzen weiter
engumschlungen nun
halt mich fest an den zwei Worten:
Ende Neu

[376] See also www.sabotage.at/sos/plateau.php 'Territorial Phantom 02' and www.republicart.net 'Inverted Towers'. Both essays reference Neubauten's song in their reviews of subterreanean urban architecture.

['we'll dance on

tightly entwined

only hold me tight on the two words

Ending new'] [377]

Positiveness can be found too, in the desire to leave others to tread the beaten tracks, to shut the door on the old island and to '*machen einen Satz […] mit nur zwei Worten: Ende Neu'* ['to make a new phrase […] with only two words: Ending New']. The only doubt which creeps in comes with '*nur kein Neuland mehr'* ['no new country anymore'] perhaps suggesting the demise of the period of intense artistic experimentation.

4.a Squattermusik

hard music for hard times

(Unruh, *Liebeslieder*, VHS,1993)

> Every squatter can understand the meaning of beating on metal and the exploitation of materials that had not been used in this context before… (We were) trying to find things that speak…
>
> (Bargeld, NBOA sourced 26 November 2006)

In the introduction to this chapter I outlined four broad, permeable thematic areas; Squattermusik is the first. The squatter works are grounded in the contradictions of West Berlin, in its frenetic, media-dominated existence, its

[377] The sun and dance have consistently been positive reference points (as in the logo). As a transitional work, *Ende Neu* fittingly ends the book, *Headcleaner.* (Note the phrase, '*Tür zu!*' 'close that door'- employed in response to the passing of the era of new buildings collapsing.)

consumerism, and its outbursts of violence and noise. They captured the apocalyptic feel of the city with its 24 hour existence and its location (potentially) on the front line of an annihilating world war. *Steh auf Berlin* (see Chapter 7:2 *Decomposing*) provides a snapshot of the group's preferred terrain and lifestyle –'*Ich bin Hausbesetzer, ich spiele beim Hausbestzerfestival'* [I am a squatter, I play at squatter festivals']*:* (Bargeld in Teipel, 2001, p.276). The hoarsely shouted directives over the pneumatic road drill and frantic metallic drumming suggest both the physical state of the city and the protagonist's destructive philosophy as expressed in Chapter 1:

Ich steh auf Zerfall
Ich steh auf Krankheit
Auf Niedergang
Ich steh auf Ende
Auf Schluss
Auf Aus
Auf Hölle
Ich steh auf

['I stand on decay
I stand on disease
on decline
I stand on end
on closure
on out
on hell

I stand up']

Nearly three decades later, the work is still a raw, disturbing experience which mixes a messianic urgency with a surprising sincerity.

It is possible to cite any track on this first Neubauten album (1980/1) to support the image of a paradoxical metropolis, enclosed, decaying and yet saturated with commodities. However, the forty six second snippet entitled *Draussen ist feindlich*] 'Outside is hostile'] is worthy of individual attention. Its solitary staggered Dachau-dustbin lid [378] beat is counterpointed by an urgent, vulnerable private whisper of:

es wird hell
draussen ist feindlich
schliess dich ein mit mir
hier sind wir sicher
Ich liebe dich

['it's getting light
outside is hostile
shut yourself in with me
here we are safe
I love you']

[378] The metal lids were rag-picked in Dachau.

The confession is interrupted by women's voices which mock and laugh. The protagonist responds bitterly:

vergiss es

['forget it']

This fleeting gestus of invaded privacy not only suggests communal squatting, but also the wider situation of paranoiac West Berlin surrounded by *'feindlich'* and potential listeners- a surveillance city of sleepers deep within East Germany.[379]

Neubauten's early work often employed a simple image as in the stark, uncluttered, Cioran-orientated lyrics of *Abstieg und Zerfall,* 1981 (see Chapter 1);

Wir sind leer-Glaub mir
Wir sind leer
Die Zeit hat ihre Kinder langst gefressen
Und sie ist satt
Komm hier, komm mit
Sieh zu wie die Zeit
Zerfällt vor unsern Augen
Komm hier, komm mit
Wir sind leer-ohne Angst

[379] This Cold War surveillance obsession (sleepers were East or West spies) was captured by Mark Wallinger's Turner Prize contribution (2007) entitled *Sleeper* in which the Berlin Bear, imprisoned in the confines of the closed Neue Nationalgalerie at night, watches and is watched by passers-by.

Wir sind leer

Endgültig vollständig leer

Abstieg und Zerfall

['We are empty – believe me

We are empty

Time has long since devoured her children

And she is full

Come here come here

Peer on how time

Decays before our eyes

Come here come here

We are empty – without fear

We are empty

Finally – utterly – empty

Decline and decay.'] [380]

The celebratory tone of this work is reflected in its (barricade) drumming which is linked to Bargeld's reading about Bush drummers who had the ability to drum their enemies to death.[381]

The importance of television and radio for the isolated, island city is perhaps best reflected in a piece such as *Tagesschau* (1980). This is not a song in the

[380] The key phrase-' without fear'- is triumphant, as is the satisfaction and ease with 'being empty' (and hence, ready for the new). This offers a marked contrast to the recent struggles to achieve '*endlich leer'* as in *Unvollständigkeit* 2007.

[381] '*Ich hab mal gehört, dass Buschtrommler Männer hinrichten können, die werden an'nen Pfahl gebunden, dann fangen sie an, im Herzrhythmus zu trommeln und werden immer schneller, und nach drei Tagen sind sie tot'* (Maeck, rock session 6: 1982, p.111).

traditional sense; it is a hectic six minute collage of television and radio news coverage which reflects West Berlin's status as a media city on the capitalist frontline. Further examples of this raw, urban noise and images of decay, disease, destruction and time running out can be found on the albums, *Verbrannte Erde, (1981-86), Stahlmusik, (1980), Architektur & Geißelnahme, (1982)* and the 2004 CD issue of 1980-82 recordings, *Kalte Sterne*. Later texts occasionally still reference Armageddon, albeit a different and perhaps more personal one brought on by natural disasters or the 'scavenging beast of Time' (*Redukt*). Even if the earlier Armageddon had occurred through Super Power hostilities – 'For my generation, there was one sound that triggered off fear […] there was one sound that could rip open the skies- it's started! World War Three has broken out!' (Bargeld, 1997, p.54) - it could have created the post-apocalyptic liberty somewhat idealised in the title song of *Patienten O.T.* (subtitled *Die Neue Sonne*); here the protagonist waits on the edge of the world for the *New Sun*; it burns more than it shines but the heavens are no longer divided.[382]

4.b The Body (human and state) and Journeys (through Müller landscapes)

The next thematic area encompasses two recurring subjects in Neubauten's texts – the body and journeying. First, the physical body occurs as a motif throughout the work – for example, as *Kalte Sterne* (1981) which explores the

[382] Alternatively Neubauten's music and texts could invoke fire (as expressed in *Abfackeln!*) shamanistically to pre-empt and nullify this threat. (Also see this chapter's introduction - Jaz Coleman's comment regarding the positive outcome of an apocalypse). Fire is considered later as a textual theme.

idea of mankind originating from carbon to *Redukt-lost in detail* (2000) which takes an Artaudian view of the body's superfluidity and incompleteness. These concerns are still present in *Alles Wieder Offen* (2007). The body as a sonic object or a transmitter of noise is also a frequent image. In *Redukt* this occurs reflectively:

Bin ich, ist ich in jeder Zelle
Wohl kaum ist
Ich die Summe des genetischen Materials
Als wäre die Musik im Schaltplan des Radios

['Am I, is me in every cell
though hardly
'I' is the sum of the genetic material
as if the music were lodged inside the radio's wiring diagram'].

The body can house the signal which rushes through vessel and vein (*Ubique Media Dämon*) or be a compliant receiver as in *Halber Mensch* (1985). Here Neubauten's half-man is wired up for truth, furnished with noise reduction and sensual stimulation; hence, Halber Mensch cannot see his/her second half who:

schreiend erwacht
schreiend näherkommt

['wakes up screaming

approaches screaming']. [383]

The body as music is also present in *DNA Wasserturm (*1983, *OT);* the sounds created from field work inside an abandoned Schöneberg waterpower are placed with a *Träumetexte* of an accident in a garden. Having cut his finger while trying to free it of sticky insects, the protagonist notices that the blood and dead insects clot in the sink under the running tap; he attempts to unblock the plug hole:

> *und was ich in den Händen halte ist wie Spaghetti [...] wie elektrische Teile…Spannungsregler, Dioden, usw. Ich denke mir: das kenn ich doch....Das sind doch meine DNS Moleküle...*
>
> ['The stuff I am holding in my hands is like spaghetti […] like electrical components….voltage regulators, diodes and the like. I am thinking; /I know what that is…those are my DNA molecules'…]

He describes these as '*kleine Plastikleitern'* ['little plastic ladders'] which he lays out to dry only to be asked '*wie hört man sich das denn an?'* ['how do you listen to it?'][384]

[383] Another interpretation of this aspect reflects Bargeld's views about recording studios being identically wired in order to produce identical music; 'the way they are designed also designs the way you're meant to play. If you don't ignore the dictations and the limitations, you lose most of the magical qualities' (Bargeld, 1988, p.110).

[384] In seeing his body as an instrument and a transmitter of noise, Bargeld not only recalls John Cage's story of being in the sound proof chamber but also the Butoh concept of the body being the dance.'How do you listen to it?' is a key question for Neubauten.

Neubauten's texts also deliberate on human evolution and the human body's incompleteness and inadequacy (or simply its bad design). Lyrics explore the idea that the human structure is not the best possible one, or at least, is still evolving. Perhaps it should have stayed in the sea and not have walked upright (*Aufrecht gehen,* 1981*)*; perhaps it should have a foot brain.[385] How far could it be reduced and still function or function differently? Can it ever achieve '*vollendete gegenwart?'* ['present perfect'] (*Venuskolonie,* 2007). In *Patienten OT,* the body is in a Kafkaesque nightmare as it sprouts extra tendrils (*Neun Arme)* amidst sonic subterranean heaviness. In *Kein Bestandteil sein* (1987) this state is matched with a voice as free as a bird's screech without human constraints and rules. Wings are desired in *Zerzörste Zelle* (1987*)* because '*Arme keine Schwingen sind und völlig fluguntauglich'* ['arms are not wings/and fully fail to fly'] [386]

This scrutiny of unfinished, incorrect mankind makes frequent use of the word, *Zelle*. *Zerstörte Zelle* ['destroyed cell'] (*Fünf auf der nach oben offenen Richterskala,* -FRS*)* concerns deconstructed cells/walls, of a country, a city, Berlin (Wall) and a prison cell (of Tommaso Campanella); these ideas move through the personal ('*meine Zellstruktur'* - Bargeld's own abused liver) to the myth of the chained overreacher and fire-giver, Prometheus who was claimed as a revolutionary hero by Beethoven (and Bargeld). Prometheus' liver (seat of passion and prophecy) in not renewing each day, as in the original myth, implies that '*der Adler muss verhungern'* ['the eagle must starve']. This moves the reading from the personal/physical of the protagonist's health to the

[385] Bargeld is referring to Julian Jaynes' *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind, 1976* (1997, p.183).
[386] See *Headcleaner* book (1997, p.161) for Bargeld's views on the Artaudian body.

political cell of the Federal Republic whose barely de-Nazified eagle, threatened with the demise of the revolutionary passion, must now starve. However, as in many of Neubauten's texts there is a Müller overload of meaning; for example, this could refer to the German student revolution or to a more global perspective.[387] (The eagle is presented upside down on the inner cover of text translations of the album, an image also used by Baselitz.)

. Author's *FRS* inner cover, with permission to use, & *Eagle* 2005, G. Baselitz, *Works,* London: Royal Academy of Art Publications, 2007

Another early example of the balancing of the body's cells and the political cell can be found in the already cited *Durstiges Tier,* 198*2* (see Chapter 5:5 *Nietzsche's Dance*). Here the '*Träge Zellen'* ['indolent cells'] of what appears to be Nietzsche's underachiever/last man- a thirsty animal- is paralleled by the '*Zellkern'* ['cell core/the Wall'] which breaks up the new islands (Berlin). Both

[387] Although West Germany retained the eagle as its national motif, it was careful to reduce the size and the ferocity of the Nazi bird into an inoffensive, domesticated creature and relate it to the USA version. Several interpretations are possible for the revolutionary (suffering) Prometheus and the starving nation/nationalism (eagle); obviously fire, 'the gift' is to be celebrated.

need to perish in the fire or be reduced over a slow flame as in the later *Redukt*. This Artaudian solution reoccurs in *Unvollständigkeit* (2007) with further bodily shedding, hauling out and reducing. But now the treatment (which seems more difficult) is not over a slow flame; rather it is through dissolution like sugar, a flushing out as vomit, or an enema or even as as the last breath and letting go of life:

> *Endlich sauber.Endlich leer...*
>
> *Ein letztes Gas, ein Flatus.*
>
> *Ich: meine Hülle…*
>
> ['Clean at last. Empty at last…
>
> A last gas, a flatus…
>
> Me: my shell'…] [388]

The examination of the body, personally and politically, frequently returns to the question - when everything is reduced, what exactly is the nature of human identity? When doubt sets in, the protagonist attempts to find affirmation in a personal involvement in music, writing and performance: '*Das Ich behauptet, solange eine Zunge, eine fuchtelnde Hand: noch Ich behaupten kann'* ['The I makes claims, as long as a tongue, a fidgeting hand/can claim I'] [389] and the final statement of *Redukt* pleads: '*endlich,*

[388] Achieving emptiness or space in Benjamin's sense of 'clearing' becomes harder as one grows older, especially with the lost fire which seems to be ironically associated with completeness. This dilemma is frequently referenced in *Alles Wieder Offen.*

[389] Barber talks about Antonin Artaud's presence as primarily a voice tract and hands in *The Screaming Body* (1999).

unendlich, in Ruhe gelassen, aber beweglich, frei zu lärmen, ohne Schuld' (see Chapter 3 title).

Headcleaner (1993) and *3thoughts* (1993) both use the body for political critique. These songs originate from the album, *Tabula Rasa* much of which was composed in the aftermath of the Gulf War, 1990-1. *Headcleaner,* a cleaning liquid for tape heads, becomes the solution to wash the mind of stale thoughts with 'wire brushes to the vermin trash': '*Geronnene Gedanken, gefrorene taut auf mit Headcleaner!'* ['Clotted thoughts frozen now melt with Headcleaner'].[390] Its militaristic, marching sound and delivery (see Chapter 5:6 *Neubauten's Tanztheater*) encase ironic sentiments which can reference both the media coverage of the Gulf War and the western domination of Germany's unification. These juxtapose the call to (righteous) arms with a violent dream and a Beatles' utopian anthem:

> *Generalmobilmachung!*
> *zwecks Dekonditionierung aller!*
> *[…] Neue Wunder, neue Schrecken […]*
> *Hinter uns das All*
> *mit uns die Gemeinheit*
> *gegen die Allgemeinheit*
> *ist jedes Mittel recht*
> *und billig nur das Mittelmass*

[390] There is a literal parallel with the forceable use of DDT by the US occupiers on the conquered Japanese civilians to eliminate head lice.

['General mobilization!

all subjects to be deconditioned

[…] new wonders, new horrors […]

Behind us the universe

with us inhumanity

Against universal humanity

any means is right and proper

only the right to the mean average']

die hälfte meiner träume ist kahlgeschoren

gewalt

warten

das erste treten gegen die tür

oder

der erste von offizieller seite

mit fragen

['One half of my dreams is shaved bald

Violence

Waiting

the first battering on the door

or

the first one from official quarters

with questions'] [391]

Ein Lied zwo, drei

Cause nothing has been done that can't be done…

All you need is…

HEADCLEANER

3Thoughts (written in English) makes a similar use of the human-political body but in its brevity and its single conceit, it becomes a sharper attack; it is both a Brechtian poem and a Baudrillardian statement about reality as simulation:

> The text was written on the day that the Gulf War broke out. The Gulf War was fed to us as a media event. And as the dance company for whom the text was being written didn't make any thematic restrictions, a warlike theme forced its way into the vacuum….simulation is pornography. Up until that point there were several steps, and it's no coincidence that the mystification of both the orgasm and the atom bomb happened at the same time (Bargeld, 1997, p.57).

In 3 thoughts/stanzas the text charts man's expanding ability to kill his/her fellow man. This is linked to sexual activity; the first thought speculates that -

the advent of the iron age

made the elongation of the male sex

[391] See Chapter 4 on the policies of Treuhandanstalt, the witchhunt of GDR artists, academics and officials and the bias of the 'Critical Reconstruction' programme, all of which helped to give the West its identity while denying any to the East.

unavoidable

and its main aim

the penetration

the knife, the sword, the spear.

The second thought develops this with the advent of gunpowder, firearms and bombs and links these to ejaculation. The final thought needs no further comment if one recalls the nightly television coverage of the First Gulf War:

Third

I think:

Simulation

Through screen or helmet

Makes this

Pornography

Bargeld's voice is mechanical and distorted, as if through a megaphone, making a disinterested public statement amidst rocket fire, explosions and churning metallic beats. The vocals subside into battle sounds then return with an exaggeratedly plumy, English pronunciation. '*Simulation'* is spoken twice; the voice, now very muffled, continues, ending with the strange little aside that '*my mother is afraid of me joining a devil's sect*.' The impression is of an unruffled but uncomprehending Western voice out of its depth in a faraway war.

Haus der Lüge introduces the second theme of journeys by combining a metaphorical journey through the body structured as a *Mietskasernen* (a type of multi-storied Berlin apartment dwelling in which Bargeld grew up) with a critique of the Federal Republic.[392]

'Fashionable' Mietskasernen, Berlin (Photograph taken by author 10.05)

It contains the already mentioned (Chapter 7:3 *Muttersprache*) puns on *Dach* and *Schoss* (*Dach* is roof/attic but also slang for head/mind and (*Ge)Schoss* is both floor, projectile, lap and in Partridge's translation, womb); these extend the fusion and play of the personal and the political in line with the argument developed by Gaston Bachelard in *Politics of Space* (Leach, 1997, p.94). Bachelard analyses the house as a body of images, a vertical being which ensures the polarity of attic and cellar with the attic/roof synonymous with rationality. As the song depicts a roof or attic of dead divinities, the rule of

[392] This former barrack-housing, built between 1860 and 1914, was the pre-eminent symbol of Berlin as an industrial metropolis and became the main overcrowded and ill-ventilated accommodation for the working classes. Many are now fashionably renovated.

divine reason appears to be over and awaiting Bargeld's protagonist from the cellar (or the subconscious).[393] Apart from the body and the Federal Republic, the Mietskasernen becomes a Pinteresque establishment of rooms for the self-deluded, where a late 20th century Everyman pursues a frantic journey up the disintegrating stairs, meeting on each storey (story?) various characters who are desperately trying to sift through the obscure traces of evidence to find some significance; they frown as they search for spelling errors but they cannot even decipher their own names. On the first floor there is the fool, bound and gagged to a kitchen stool, who believes in all he can feel - with his hands in his lap:

Hier leben die Blinden
die glauben was sie sehen
und die Tauben
die glauben was sie hören

['here live the blind
who believe what they see
and the deaf (Tauben also can mean dove)
who believe what they hear'].

[393] The attic has another meaning. Bargeld has said that as a child, the attic was a forbidden place (Lachner, 1997, p.163). Andrea Lauterwein, in her book on Kiefer and Celan, *Myth, Mourning and Memory*, London, Thames & Hudson, 2007, writes about the attic as a metaphor of German culture from that of the poor poet and intellectual marginalization, as a refuge from the Gestapo (Anne Frank) to the place, after 1945, to hide the forbidden Nazi memorablia. From the latter she creates a critique for Kiefer's depiction of attics. This reiterates the quotation from Lesley Wood (Chapter 4 title).

The journey becomes a critique of the gullibility of the populace and the errors of state (‘*Gedankengänge sind gestricken/ in Kopfhöhe braun/ infamy’*) and church (‘*katholische violett/ zur besseren Orientierung’)*.[394] The inhabitants here are no better than the earlier thirsty animals or half men. On arrival in the attic, the protagonist witnesses the dead angels and ‘*ein alter Mann’* (God) on the roof truss. ‘*Gott hat sich erschossen…lüge, lüge’* [‘God has shot himself, lies, lies’] is ambiguously repeated as sounds of the structure’s collapse die away. The epilogue is whispered:

dies ist der Keller

hier lebe ich […]

dies ist ein Schoss

[‘this is a cellar

here’s where I live […]

this here is a lap/womb’]

In discussing the work with Harry Lachner, Bargeld referred to *Was ist ist* and explained that the empty sky (and guilt-cleared attic) is to be filled with (utopian) music.[395]

[394] The references to the colours - infamous brown (flights of fancy painted head-height) and Catholic purple (for better orientation) - suggest the Third Reich and the Papacy.

[395] He elaborated that the *Dachgeschoss* could now be used to *throw a party (for) everybody useful somehow.*(1997, p.162) Hence, he developed an idea for a piece based on 144 ‘useful’ people and fictional characters who would break the bonds of gravity to arrive on the roof to sit at 12 X12 tables while Neubauten played the dishes and the food These include Artaud, Nietzsche, Dietrich, Schwitters, Höch, Russolo, Jean Paul, Cage, Burroughs, Rio Reiser, Heiner Müller, Grosz, Bloch, Bosch, Beuys, Tucholsky, Karl Valentin, Eisenstein, Charlie Parker, Billie Holiday, Heine, Shakespeare, Kafka, Poe, Strindberg, J.S. Bach, Bunuel, Satie, Woody Guthie, Shostakovich, Pasolini, Flan O’Brian, Edith Sitwell, Hamlet, Falstaff, Abelard and Eloise....and more.

The journey taking place in *Sie* (1993) abandons the leitmotif of the body for a Müller-like '*Reiseführer durch die Landschaften jenseits des Todes'* ['journey through a landscape beyond death'] as noted in Section 3. In keeping with this style it is intentionally unclear what or who *Sie* signifies; the pronoun could be the traveller (who becomes 'ich'), a country (GDR?) or state of affairs (Communism?). Bargeld says that 'Sie' is not a person; however, he had intended to call the work *Persona Non Grata* (interview with author 5 November 2004). The dense, unfathomable montage style of Müller and his theory of the time warp effect of the Wall pervades the piece and Bargeld acknowledges this with:

> To a large extent the text is thanks to my acquaintance with Heiner Müller and the discussions about The Hamletmaschine. That showed me how compactly you can write a text so that the stage directions acquire their own meaning, stage directions that you cannot transpose onto a stage. It's all theatre in your head (Lachner, 1997, p.256).

Hence Bargeld calls the work, *Kopftheater* as, despite its stage directions, lighting and scenic settings (in written form it is a theatre/film script), it is a song; hence, the 'visuals' can only be in the head.

My interpretation of this long lyric – one which is rarely performed because of the complexity of the *Kopftheater* multi-voices – is as a series of snapshots on the East's loss of state and identity and its citizens' difficulties in adapting to

the West. (Bargeld's preferred title enhances this reading.) The constellation of images include a disappearing wall into the West, shining promises, broken monuments, battlefields, ruins and catastrophes; these also recall Trakl's *Abendland* (1914). Here there are similar reflections on 'dying along the crumbled wall…eerie red sunset…thorny hedge…rocky path' with similar ambiguous protagonists – 'we', 'the homeless one', 'you dying people', 'great cities'…[396] *Sie's* detailed lighting and movement directions (Matthew Partridge's translations are quoted here) subhead the work. These open with 'no light' then move through several sequences including 'red dawn sky on the Eastern horizon', 'hard black light', 'in the light of the press', 'phantasmagorias which rapidly flare up' and 'burning bushes'. The stage/camera directions detail 'Sie' making a journey over the rubble*:*

> Goes with conviction in this direction.
> A tallish wall, along it: Breach….
> the wall decreases in size.
> Eventually disappears but continues underground. [397]

This 'traveller' passes a black block bearing an idol, a control post and a red-bordered poste*r* perhaps reminiscent of the East. 'She' then enters a 'Field of Tombs' strewn with '*corpus delicti'* as stumbling blocks and snares; there is a phantasmagoria of men in drag shooting flowers at coloured, stupid birds, Joan Baez, 'sacrificial lamb dessous en gros' and –

[396] *Abendland* has been interpreted as an early 20th century prophecy of the decline of the West- *Abend* translates as 'evening' and 'west'.*Sie* could be said to ironically reverse this with its reference to a western sunrise.
[397] This suggest the concept of *Die Mauer im Kopf* – the idea that Berliners initially had great difficulty ridding themselves of the mental wall. See Ravenhill's *Over There* (2009).

Spirits of the orphaned ghosts of Europe-haunting spectres

universal do-gooder ideas

an answering machine for final

requests as a self-firing device. Stool.

And at last, for the last time, a hedge

of burning bushes. [398]

Finally the traveller's silhouette shrinks and vanishes in the strong light.

In addition to the staging directions (and preferred title), the central body of the text (quoted here in German) also offers a metaphor for the failed Socialist utopia of the GDR and the initially hopeful Ossi 'immigrant''s walk to the West – and his/her initial welcome:

durch das loch in einer flagge

Die masse hoffenstarrend

Vermeintlich sonnenaufgang

Am westlichen horizont

['through the hole in a banner

the crowd seemingly hope-staring

at the sunrise

on the western horizon']

[398] It is debatable as to how far one should attempt to find meaning in this montage of images; e.g. Joan Baez was a 'favourite' in the GDR and this list could suggest motifs of communism's *spectre,* its promises and demise; but as with Müller's *Bildbeschreibung,* the whole is more meaningful than the sum of its parts.

Yet, there is also a sense that the protagonist is uncertain for having explained that-

Sie war ideal und viele waren
In sie verschossen
im gleissen ihre einst unvergleichliche figur
sie hat es vielen angetan
aber sie hat formen angenommen

Ich verlass sie- enttäuscht

['she was ideal and many had been
struck by her
In the glow of her once incomparable figure
it did something to many
but then got right out of shape
I leave her-deluded']-

s/he then states *Ich verliess sie/ ungetäuscht* ['I am leaving her- not deluded'].

Toward the end a stage direction – 'chanting the old litany' is accompanied by '*Ichbinderichbinderichbin'* ['IamthatIamthatIam'] which suggests the East's loss of identity, and the difficulty its citizens experienced in finding their place

in Western Capitalism is captured in the repeated words that it is 'not here what I unflaggingly seek/it is not elsewhere-so nowhere-where else?' [399]

The music creates a sense of urgency with its insistent, light, metallic tom tom beat and the megaphoned, distanced, voice-over effect for the directions; the key lighting states are uttered as confidences while Bargeld's unusually soft vocals contrast with the urgent instrumentation, to create an almost somnambulistic effect. The lengthy section of directions without the protagonist's presence sounds like an important public announcement while the delivery of the litany implies a growing inability to speak.[400] Each '*ungetäuscht/getäuscht'* is stretched out and the concluding '*abgang sie'* ['she exits'] is snapped shut bringing the work to an end as unexpectedly as the demise of the GDR.

The use of the journey motif is not confined to this mid-late nineties period but persists in Neubauten's lyrics especially as flight and departure in the work of the 21st-century as in Section 4d and as Eternal return and waiting in *Alles Wieder Offen* (4e).

[399] Volker Braun's very simple post-1989 poem offers an alternative snapshot of the loss experienced by the East: 'What I never owned will be taken from me/What I never experienced, I shall forever miss.Hope lay in the path, like a trap/My property, now you're got it in your claws,When will I again say 'mine' and mean 'all.'

[400] After unification the East was pressured to conform to Western lingusistic models (reflecting the one-sided nature of the political takeover) as only a handful of East Germanisms had previously succeeded in entering Western usage (Lewis, 1995, p.314).

4.c Interim and Science

This third thematic band encompasses 'interim' (as a condition) and the use of scientific imagery. The interim permeates the whole oeuvre from the collapsing/decaying/recycling of squattermusik, through the transmitting, reducing, travelling and yearning of the human and political body to the perpetual motion and flight of the later work. It could well have been left undeclared but for Neubauten's acknowledgement of its importance (interview with author 24 April 2006).[401]

Two themes through which the interim is brought into focus are fire and the elusive nature of love - obviously close poetic concepts. Fire (referenced in Chapter 6 as a sonic and visual on-stage instrument) was a vital Artaudian metaphor of transformation in Neubauten's early work. Its revolutionary ethos was encapsulated in Prometheus (*Zerstörte Zelle*- '*Ich bin Prometheus/ hol mein Geschenk zurück'* see above, 4b), it cleared and cleansed space; it was associated with passion, wildness, fear and beauty, and of course, with the Neubauten stage where it was used primarily by Unruh. This direct use originated with *Abfackeln!* when the group decided to visualise the text in which both the town and the soul are incited to 'torch' themselves in order to be cleansed. Bargeld (Dax, 2005, p.78) explained: 'Fire became part of the song as a dramatic interlude. You always hear nightmarish stories about burning stages and fire getting out of control…in reality it was always a

[401] Von Henning sees Müller as a writer of the 'inbetween' (1995, p.viii).

controlled situation.*'*[402] As text fire is central in *Falschgeld* (1983) where even lead (Beuys' and Kiefer's prison against man's warmth) burns and shines. In *Vanadium-i-ching* (1983) the vultures hover over the fire and the soul must burn; in *Armenia* (1983) the protagonist '*brennt auf den Nägeln'*[403] and in *Salamandrina* (1993) s/he hauls him/herself into the fire by a hand which is already '*stake(d)'* in the fire. *Feurio* (1989) confronts one of Germany's most notorious fires with:

> *Marinus, Marinus, hörst du mich?*
> *Marinus, Marinus, du warst es nicht*
> *es war König Feurio!*
>
> ['Marinus, Marinus, do you hear me?
> Marinus, Marinus, it was not you
> it was King Feurio'].*[404]*

When fire is used metaphorically to represent love it can range from the light of the beloved which can '*zehrst meinen Schatten auf'* ['consume my shadows'*: Fiat Lux,* 1989] to the unlikey incendiary image of 'you wore a dress of battery acid; our conversation was like lighter fluid*…'* (*Airplane Miniature*3,* 2003): from the burning agony of *Seele brennt ('Liebe ist ein Scheiterhaufen'*)

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[402] See Calkin's comment in Chapter 6:3 *Interesting Corners and Sites*. Bargeld has explained that he grew up with the household fire as the main form of heating. In the foreword of *233 Degrees Celsius*, Bargeld describes childhood memories of watching his mother light the solid fuel stove and the movement of the gas flame of the water heater; here was a fascination with sound and colour which it appears became an incendiary passion. However, 'torching' the town, RAF style, is not enough, for real change the soul must burn too.
[403] Translated by Partridge as 'burning to know'.
[404] This refers to the conviction of the Dutch anarchist Marinus von Lubbe for the Reichstag Fire. *Feurio* was first worked on as part of Peter Zadek's *Andi.*

[‘love is a funeral pyre’] to *Zebulon’s* (1993) cool, reflective observation that ‘*nur sie wird das Licht als erste sehen’* [‘only she will see the light first’].

Lovers often appear to be in an interim state (like fire) suspended between the restricted, human body and political or cosmic concerns; hence, the love text is never overtly personal or intimate - the complexity of the language and the ambiguous use of pronouns renders it more cerebral than intuitive. *Die Interimsliebenden* (1993) is a complex work with a plethora of meanings combined in its title of ‘interim’ and ‘lovers’ as it jump cuts between fallen governments and the description of a kiss. In keeping with Müller’s writing, there is a deliberate ambiguity with pronouns and the recipient is flooded with a series of disconnected snapshots. The result is, as with *Sie* (with its similar uncertain pronouns and oblique referencing) there is a sense that the work’s centre is intentionally omitted. The interpretation I argue here is of the *interim* nature of a relationship and of political change with the impermanence of life and systems foregrounded (as summed up by Brecht in his 1947/8 *A Short Organum for the Theatre* (Willett, 1978, p.190:36 and cited in Chapter 4, Introduction)).

The work, in endeavouring to describe a kiss of the ‘Interimlovers’, reads like a summary of the events of November 1989 - the fall of the GDR and the Eastern Bloc. The opening verse sets the kiss against ‘*roten Riesen’* (‘red giants’) which recall the huge red granite monuments of the East for their leaders and martyrs so quickly removed by the West’s ‘*weissen Zwerg’* [‘white dwarfs’] after the ‘*Zungenschlags’* [‘a slipped beat of the tongue’]. However,

the transformation of these giants into dwarves could equally refer to cosmic entities created from '*Urknall und Wärmetod'* ['big bang and total entropy']. The private aspect of trying to describe a kiss (of lovers' or politicians' betrayal) reflects the unreliability/inadequacy of language: '*während nur eines Zungenschlags'* ['in the space of just one slipped beat of the tongue']… *'mir fallen kosmische Dimensionen/ aus dem Mund'* ('cosmic dimensions are falling/ out of my mouth'). The second verse explores this more globally and introduces the key (Burroughs) phrase – 'here are no harmless words':

In ihrem gemeinsamen Mund
lebt ein Kolibri
mit jedem seiner Flügelschläge
darüf das Auge viel zu träge
Kulturen erblühen und vergehen
ganze Kontinente untergehen
Hier gibt es keine harmlosen Worte

['in their communal mouth
lives a colibri
with each humming beat of its wings
too swift for the eye to see
cultures flourish and perish
whole continents vanish
here are no harmless words']

The third verse appears to return to the events of November 1989:

Während nur eines Augenaufschlags
haben sie geputscht
die Regierung gestürzt
Parlament aufgelöst
haben Wahlen abgehalten
das Ergebnis annulliert
haben Wahlen wiederholt
sind letzendlich exiliert
von Geschichte ausradiert

['in the course of one winking of an eye
they have putsched
as the government was felled
parliament dissolved
elections held
results annulled
new elections called
then finally exiled
in history reviled']

The piece concludes with a mantra on the lovers' interim existence having encased this in a series of antithesis – one being 'between semtex and utopia' suggesting the relationships of the Rote Armee Fraktion, in particular, Ensslin

and Baader. The complexity of the work invites but does not resolve, the question who are these inbetween lovers - East and West Germany, the Superpowers, Gorbachev and Honecker (with the former's kiss of solidarity or death on the GDR leader's cheek), the RAF activists, extreme states of being or is this simply about the power/magic/danger of language? Certainly, an effective reading of 'one slipped beat of the tongue/cosmic dimensions are falling out of my mouth/between microphone and macrocosm/between chaos and on no course…' is that of the iconic slip of the tongue by a GDR official which brought down the Wall (and the 'red giants') [405] - hence, one statement remains prominent– *'hier gibt es keine harmlose Worte.'*

Neubauten's use of scientific language does not reflect the fascination with and anxiety over, scientific/cosmic concerns which, to some extent, accompanied some Kosmische Musik. Their use of scientific imagery concentrates more on the impossibility of love, beauty or completeness. The resulting work can echo, in a popular contemporary mode, imagery found in the works of the Metaphysical poets, such as John Donne; for example in (*Zebulon,* 1993): '*Lass meine Mitte deine Achse sein/um die dein Leib sich windet'* ['let my centre be your axis around which your body turns'].[406]

[405] On the 9 November 1989, after the GDR Politbüro had approved direct travel to the West in the hope of easing the protests, an official, Günter Schabowsky was asked by a reporter during a televised press conference when this would come into effect. He searched for the date in his notes and then at a loss, mistakenly replied, 'right away'. After a momentary double-take thousands besieged the border points in Berlin, passed the guards who knew nothing of this and thus the two Berlins came together from a 'slip of the tongue'.
[406] Robert Lort, in his essay *Collapsing Neu-organs, EN and the Body without Organs,* 2000, http://members.optusnet.com.au/~robert2600/azimute/music/en accessed 21.02.08, also notes the Donne influence; he cites Neubauten's three main thematic metaphors as astronomy (its orbits, pulses, stretched time and multi-dimensions) fire and biology.

The employment of orbital movement (in mirco and macro structures) is found in *Selbstportrait mit Kater* (2004) where *der Kater* ('hangover') makes *'zur Rotation um die eigenes Achse'* ['for rotation round one's axis'] and the suffering protagonist with 'fragile nerve-fabric' ends up in space committing '*Inzest mit den Sternen!' In Circles* (written and performed in English, 2000):

> all the molecules
> all the single ones
> the atoms
> their spin
> their charge
> their charm
> in circles
> in beauty.

Stella Maris (1996) also employs popular metaphysical imagery with the two lovers not as individuals but as two halves of one person. Despite this they lack any orbital harmony for they constantly miss each other in their dreams at various meeting points - the Poles, the earth's centre, Everest, K2, Atlantis, Eldorado or at the world's margin.

'*X'* on the Supporters Album *1 (2003) similarly conceals a discourse on failed love and the interim between relationships in layers of conceit on the diverse meanings of 'X'. It begins with the *Nibelungenlied* and Siegfried's unintended betrayal of his Achilles' spot because of the X embroidered by his lover on his

robe. It moves through X as identity or illiteracy, as chromosomes or gender, in mathematics, or as a seal of honour or a kiss; as marking the treasure, a crossroads, pornography, over-sized clothing, the Apple-x delete key to '*am ende mache ich drei kreuz'* ['finally I make three crosses'] a colloquial German expression of relief that one does not have to deal with someone any longer and ends with '*auf ex'* [a drinking toast] which is repeated three times to ritualistically erase the memory and clear the ground for new possibility. Maarten Bullynck and Iannis Goerlandt of the German Department, Ghent University, Belgium have provided a fascinating critique of these references in their paper, *The Semiotics of X.*[407] They argue that these images intentionally move from high culture to low with the disintegration of the relationship and that the abstract, almost technoid sign 'x' reinforces the protagonist's alienation.[408] Neubauten's use of scientific imagery is not specific to the few songs mentioned here; it extends throughout their work and can be found as gravity, the total eclipse of the sun, the Boreas, life on other planets as well as the already cited references to DNA, the nervous system and cells.

4.d Bird's- Eyed Music and the new Berlin

The final thematic area continues the motif of journeying (attempting to depart from Berlin/cross borders) but focuses in particular, on birds and an aerial perspective as lyrical material; the species is both contemporaneous with

[407] M. Bullynck & I. Goerlandt, *The Semiotiks of X,* Gent Universiteit, 2006, www.arts.usyd.edu.au/publications/philament/issue7 accessed 12.08.06

[408] The cool female voice spliced into *X* as the unsympathetic partner belongs to Dr. Maria Zinfert who was part of Bargeld's growing literacy in his song and written texts. Schoenberg used 'X' in his notation to sign sprechgesang- the delivery used in this piece.

prehistory and ourselves (hence, interim too) and is able to defy gravity and musical restraints (a desired state). Birds were present at the cadavers' dance in *Patentien OT,* their screech was off the *Richterskala* in *Kein Bestandteil sein*; after the flood they had a new song in their beaks in *Die Seltener Vogel* (2004) and they came with advice, in dreams, on what to sing in *Paradiesseit.* (2004). Bargeld (*The Wire,* February 2004, p.41) sums up their appeal:

> For me the utopian quality of birds is not solely in the fact that they are able to fly, it's more in how the flying changes their perspective. The ability to look onto something, to see the lay of the land. That is what humans really envy birds for.

Hence, linked with birds' (and angels') aerial perspective, is Neubauten's musically expressed annoyance at man's gravitational imprisonment – expressed in *Newton's Gravitätlichkeit (Silence is Sexy,* 2000) where Bargeld blames the scientist for his discovery:

> *Grad' gegen seine Apfelfalle hab' ich mich gewehrt,*
> *Sie wurde gegen meinen Willen trotzdem installiert*
>
> ['above all his apple pitfall I opposed,
> but against my will it was nevertheless installed']

and in the earlier, *Was ist ist* (1996) which demands absolute liberation from Newton's '*schwerkraftwahn'* [*'*gravity delusion']**.** This interpretation of gravity as holding man back from infinite possibility links back to Nietzsche, also to

the work of Joseph Beuys and Anselm Kiefer as well as Artaud's observations on the body (without organs)'s ability to dance (see Chapter 5).

The over-riding themes of *Perpetuum Mobile* (2004) which contains *die Seltener Vogel* and *Paradiesseits,* are birds, flight, migration and the rituals of leaving (Berlin). Bargeld commented that it is also about a change of air (*Luftveränderungsvariationen*), of character/scene which is echoed in its airy sounds. His preferred title for the album was *Das neue Lied* - perhaps reflecting the group's new start with the Supporter Initiative as well as the changing architectural face of Berlin; hence, the bird of *Die Seltener Vogel,* unlike Benjamin's or Müller's hapless angels or the ambiguous bird in *Bildbeschreibung*, is not only 'rare' but offers hope with:

den Schnabel in die Himmel [...]
ich warte
auf das was der seltene Vogel
bei seiner Rückkehr
im Schnabel trägt
das neue Lied

['its beak in the heavens […]
I wait
for what the rare bird
carries on its return
in its beak

the new song'] [409]

This bird has no colour, hence no limiting party loyalties or narrow view points; it comes '*nach dem Regen sind nicht mehr alle dabei'* ['after the rains there are not many left'] and with its bird-eyed perspective it surveys '*der neuen Insel'* ['the new island'] be it Ararat, restitched Berlin or a distant utopia.

Other pieces which focus journeying are - *ich gehe jetzt, Boreas, Der Weg ins Freie, ein leichtes Säuseln* as well as the title song itself. *Der Weg ins Freie* explores two simultaneous journeys in parallel sets of lyrics which come together in certain sentences or words. The voice on the left channel describes the way to the window after waking up, while the voice on the right tells of awakening on a distant planet and looking down on the earth. Here the constant wind motif both in sound and in text, gives the work an air of melancholia and resignation as far as the new Republic is concerned. The winds (of change) are not the mighty winds whipping up the future's ruins as depicted by Benjamin or enacted in Bargeld's earlier messianic scream. They are too coolly ironic for many of the album's personae; they cannot redeem *''youme'* or resuscitate *'dead friends.'* [410]

Youme & Meyou is almost spoken, unusually in English, with a sardonic, polite German enunciation which immediately reinforces its detachment.

[409] *Ein Seltener Vogel, Bunkerversion*, 2004, owes its existence to supporter encouragement when work on it stagnated during webcasting of Phase One.
[410] The cool distance comes from the new percussive sound which is also visualised; for example, through Rudi Moser's delicate, controlled playing (of the miked Udu vase or airpipes) and Jochan Arbeit's melancholic relationship with his instruments. Both artists have a restraint which was not utlised by Einheit or Chung; this creates space and reflection.

The voice conceals a quiet anger which is expressed in the precisely delivered 'car alarms,' the higher pitched 'laptops, a phone line and a box of tangerines' and the whispered 'excessive jewellery.' Its over-courteous distance is complemented by the use of strings and piano and the light, fast, insistent tom tom beat by Moser on long, amplified pipes; this gives the song a sense of a repetitive forward movement held back in its attempts to break free. On one level this work can be seen as a critique of capitalism (and re-unification).[411] 'They' don't go from A to B (compared with the protagonist in *Perpetuum Mobile*) but go around and come back again, engaged in a continual process of commodification and its obsolescence for 'if the future isn't bright at least it's colourful.' [412] The ephemeral nature of consumerism is captured in the image of the ship built each winter time only to be burnt in the spring and in the promises of life's improvements represented by 'construction sites,' 'Starbucks and Guggenheims;' 'turning houses into homes' and even those near 'mature mild-natured catastrophes'. From statements such as –' they defend each other against the past….they invent each other ever anew….still they won't have a different view of everyone or anything' - one gleans an image of the politician and the marketer carefully closing ranks, complimenting and justifying each other's behaviour. This oddly tuneful piece echoes Beuys' controversial statement (Ray, 2001, p.150)[413] that although we may not put people into the fire anymore we still kill them - with commodification: '(They are) destroyed by the contemporary type of the

[411] It can also be read as concerning the blurring of the differences between East and West Berlin under the promises of consumerism.
[412] Unlike in *Negativ Nein* (1981) where life was not colourful but 'amassed we go to ruin'- a preferred state.
[413] G.Ray, *Mapping the Legacy,* Sarasota, John & Maple Ringling Museum of Art, 2001.

economy, which hollows people out inside and makes them slaves of consumption and in doing so tears their souls out of their bodies.'

Dead Friends (Around the Corner) uses again the central metaphor of (non) travel and/or movement; it is a song that evokes an emotionally-charged Heimat that the protagonist has left behind. On a simple level this song possibly refers to friends from the old Schöneberg/Kreuzberg days in the early eighties' bohemian scene who did not make it:

Hier ist alles unverändert
Es sieht aus wie überall
Die ganze Gegend liegt nicht auf meinen Wegen
So komme ich eher selten hier vorbei

Hier sind die die gingen
Und gegangen worden sind […]

Die meisten sind immer noch hungrig
Dabei gibt es nicht einmal mehr Zigaretten
So halten sie sich fest an den Ideen.

['everything here is unchanged
it looks like everywhere
the whole area is out of my way
so I rarely come around here

here are those who went

And those who were made to leave […]

most of them are still hungry

and they don't even have cigarettes

So they just cling to the ideas'.]

The unexpected use of English for the chorus of 'There is a place around the corner/where your dead friends live' acts as a *verfremdungseffekt.* The reference to cigarettes, the black market currency of Stunde Null, suggests that for the wretched of the earth (Benjamin's traceless ones) there has been no change. The 'dead friends' seem to be inhabitants of Pierre Bourdieu's social space as a field without power, without social, cultural or symbolic capital, literally and figuratively, around the corner/edge with no currency of worth (like Whybrow's night bombers: see Chapter 4:2b *Verschwinden und Einstürzen*). [414] The key phrases of this piece – *'fahren Schwarz'* ['blind passengers'], '*gehen spazieren'* ['drift'], *'haben hier nichts anderes zu tun'* ['they have nothing else to do'],' *lange Weile'* [boredom], *'wartet zwischendrin'* ['waiting in between'], *'nicht'* ['nothing'] - evoke a strong sense of quiet desperation. Bargeld's persona is preoccupied with a past that seems to weigh him down. In the last stanza the repetition of the words *'es ist nichts'* ['it is nothing'] slowly collapses into an ambiguous '*es ist…'* as the song subsides into silence either suggesting that the persona can no longer utilise language or that a belated affirmative may be stirring.

[414] See *Understanding Bourdieu,* J.Webb, T.Schirato & G. Danaher, London, Sage Publishers, 2005, pp.x, xii, xvi.

Ich gehe jetzt ['I'm Going Now'] couples a soft hand clapped rhythm with the words, almost apologetically, thrown in over the top. Sonically there is a sense of controlled determination which only slightly breaks forward to more urgency on a few occasions. Bargeld's light sprechgesang shades some of the darker words. The colours – '*rot, grün, gelb, schwarz, rostbraun, totrot'* ['red, green, yellow, black, rust-brown, dead-red'] - are associated with the German flag and with other forces in German politics such as the Greens, the anarchists, tarnished Nazis and defeated communists. '*Funkelnagelneu ist nichts mehr'* ['brand-spanking-new is no more'] and '*Betonprosa'* ['concrete/tangible prose'] are juxtaposed. The ephemeral 'shiny new' is a constant theme of *Perpetuum Mobile*, but recalling the *Betonprosa* of the squatter music and the graffitied Wall only reaffirms that:

> *Das déjà vu ist jetzt historisch*
> *die Gemengelage wie gehabt [...]*
>
> *Es wird wie's war und wahr wird nichts*
>
> ['the deja vu is now historic
> the mixture remains as ever […]
> it will be what it was, none of it true']

The song seems to reflect on the missed opportunities created by the events of 1989.[415] All that has changed is the fact that this protagonist now wishes to leave; however, the pace and tone suggest more of a self-convincing, self-persuading attitude than a confident active one. Perhaps this is because the 'beast' (also found in *Grundstück*) has not been confronted:[416]

Das Biest ist zwar noch nicht richtig wach
Aber auch noch lange nicht hinüber
Grad erst hat es sich hin und her gewälzt
Und im Schlaf mit den Zähnen geknirscht

['the beast is not yet truly awake
but also far from finished off
just now it was tossing back and forth
and grinding its teeth in its sleep']

The piece ends on the insistent '*ich gehe jetzt'* and cuts off abruptly as if to deny any argument. Musically the album is about the act of leaving and distancing; its serial composition (dictated by the musical term, perpetuum

[415] A viewpoint well illustrated by David Hare in *Berlin/Wall*, 2009. 'Future generations are going to judge us, and they're going to judge us harshly. Between 1989 and 2001 the West missed its greatest opportunity…Between the ending of one Cold War, and the beginning of another, between the defeat of communism and its replacement by militant Islam as the West's readily convenient enemy, there was a real chance. International relations, the creative remaking of relations between countries irrespective of wealth or ideology was briefly possible. Briefly. Nothing got done. What new world order?'

[416] This recalls Brecht's epilogue from *The Resistable Rise of Arturo Ui* (1943) which warns of the still potent womb (of Fascism) which can reawaken any time because it has not been dealt with yet: 'therefore learn how to see and not to gape…the womb he crawled from still is going strong' (Brecht, *The Resistable Rise of Arturo Ui* (1943) (trans.) R. Mannheim, London, Methuen Publishing Ltd., 2000, p.99.

mobile) repeats sections without the motion being halted. This manifests as long, ethereal sounds with continuous steady streams of notes and rapid tempo. The lyrics reinforce this desire for forward movement and Beckettian lack of it. For example, in the title song (*Perpetuum Mobile*) Bargeld's persona constantly journeys from A to B. The work has a theatrical sense in its use of other voices which question the traveller as well as providing an up-tempo, satirical commentary on the journey and the rituals of 21st century air travel.[417] Two quietly expressed (almost unnoticed) comments – '*Die Träume sind verunglückte Zeitreisende'* ['the dreams are wrecked time travellers'] and '*Ist es träumenswert?'* ['is it worth dreaming of?'] - call this constant flux into question and leave the listener unconvinced by the persona's confident insistence that – '*Ich bin unterwegs'* ['I am on the way'].

Grundstück (2004) is also firmly rooted in the new Berlin and its Critical Reconstruction. As the final work on *Perpetuum Mobile*, it links directly with the supporters event in the Palast der Republik discussed in Chapter 10. It is a Benjaminian work, which celebrates clearing away. Its title plays with meanings of performance and ground space as already noted (Chapter 7:3 *Muttersprache*). This could be where the beasts still hide if they are not in the 'secret net of bunkers' of *Die Befindlichkeit des Landes* or asleep in *Ich gehe jetzt:*

Es kommen zum Vorschein die Ungetüme

lange verborgen doch noch vorhanden.

[417] Bargeld (interview with author 5 November 2004) explained that the work was based on the journey from his Berlin apartment, via Tegel and Heathrow, to a London hotel.

Unter den Schichten

Geschichten

Geschichte

Auch sie sind nicht weg.

['Now all the beasts turn up

long in hiding but still there

below the layers

stories

History

not easily chased away'.]

The familiar interplay between the personal and more public material is present again in:

was ich in deinen Träumen suche?

Ich suche nichts […]

bis ich deine Träume im Dunklen leuchten seh...

['what I'm seeking in your dreams

I'm not seeking […]

until I see your dreams shining in the dark'…]

This addressed *'du'* could equally be the city, an individual or the music.

The Neubauten soundtrack created for Hubertus Siegert's 2000 documentary on the reunified Berlin's frantic building programme, *Berlin Babylon* (see Chapter 6:4 *Four Sonic Landscapes*) closes with Silence is Sexy's *Die Befindlichkeit des Landes (The Lay of the Land).* This song follows a snatch of Beethoven's *Eroica,* a rendition of Benjamin's *Der Engel der Geschicht* and music which acknowledges the reglamourised Mitte with its hybrid *Godzilla,* the *Tiergarten Tunnel* (originally proposed by Speer) and the shimmering Sony Centre on the new, corporately-owned Potsdamer Platz. Hence the song rises from a haunted, scarred, melancholic landscape where 'Germany's wounds still lie open everywhere' (Ladd, 1997, p.11).[418]

Grave of Marlene Dietrich, Stubennauchstrasse, Berlin
(Photograph taken by author: 09.04)

The text operates on two fronts - the problematic sentiments of Critical Reconstruction and the now forgotten controversy over Marlene Dietrich's

[418] It also suggests a metaphor for Western society at the start of the 21st century; on the *AWO* tour (2008) Bargeld introduced this work as not being just about Berlin but about each venue's city too.

burial place.[419] Melancholia, Dürer's angel, links these through two very different images: firstly, the red Info box (an effort to keep the citizens engaged in the progress of the democratic reconstruction of their city) and secondly, Benjamin's angel of history denying the concept of progress (see Chapter 1). The textual references to grass growing over the city echoes Kiefer's use of a citation from Isaiah, in his art works; in fact, Kiefer's interpretation that 'rubble is the future as all that is, passes', permeates the song. [420]

Considered by *The Wire* (Keenan, February 2004, p.41) to be the song 'where Bargeld finally shot his bitterness and anger about the changing heart of Berlin', *Die Befindlichkeit des Landes* creates a dynamic montage of a lacerated landscape over which the listener is guided by Bargeld's angel. Although this aerial journey exposes the lay of the land, it is only the angel who can at last '*übersieht letztendlich das ganze Land'* ['survey the entire land'] as she flies higher and higher. We are left with mere glimpses of the photograph – '*Stoppelfeld aus Beton'* ['fields of concrete']*, 'heimlichen Bunkeranlagen'* ['secret net of bunkers'], *'die neuen Tempel haben schon Risse'* ['new temples already cracked'], *'Narbengelände'* ['scar faced terrain'] – all of which provide material for the next layer of land as they decay. Jagged, hesitant bursts of individual sound introduce the work as if a machine is trying to start; the constant surfing of afternoon television channels is hardly audible.

[419] When Dietrich returned to Germany in 1960, having actively campaigned against the Third Reich, she was met with banners proclaiming 'Go home Marlene', quoted in Neubauten's song; similar protest met her burial in 1992 in Friednau, her birth place. Berlin now recognises her with a platz (1997) and honourary citizenship (2002). Bargeld has always expressed a particular admiration for Dietrich.

[420] This quotation appears on the wall at the Hamburger Bahnhof art gallery in Invalidenstrasse, accompanying some of Kiefer's work.

A metallic beat follows with the (German) voice carefully layered over this. Whether '*Phantomschmerz und Narbe'* ['the phantom pain and scars'] refers to the Nazi past or the more recent East/West divide (or both) does not matter for '*fieses Lachen aus der rotten Info-Box und in den Gräbern wird leise rotiert'* ['foul laughter seeps from the red Info-box making some turn quietly in their graves']. Perhaps those turning quietly are like Marlene Dietrich, clumsily dealt with and then posthumously honoured.

The next stanza takes us on a flight '*Über den Schaltzentralen'* ['over the control centres'] and ends in a whisper highlighting that the (only recently acknowledged)[421] complex of command bunkers where Hitler took his life, lie uncomfortably close to the cosmopolitan centre of Potsdamer Platz. Perhaps the first line is a reference to the Wall and the dead areas created on either side of it; it also brings to mind post-1989 Potsdamer Platz watched over by its crane birds and its giant, glass Sony palace. *Marlene Dietrich Platz* (balanced between fountains and neon cinema advertisements) which lies adjacent to Potsdamer Platz is spoken ironically pointing up the belated celebration of the performer as well as its location.

[421] It was only in 2006 that the site was marked with an information board.

Marlene Dietrich Platz & Bunker Information
(Photographs taken by author, 10.06 &11.06)

As the '*künftige Ruinen'* ['future ruins'] pile up, Bargeld describes a time when grass will grow over the city – *'ihrer letzten Schicht'* ['its final layer']. Perhaps this is the only healing and reconciliation possible in such a troubled landscape which lies under '*zerschnittenen Himmel von den Jets zur Übung zerflogen'* ['the lacerated sky flown to bits by the jets rehearsing'].[422] However, Bargeld's angel offers hope, although she hangs:

...mit ausgebreiteten Schwingen
ohne Schlaf und starren Blicks
in Richtung Trümmer
hinter ihr die Zukunft aufgetürmt
steigt sie langsam immer höher
übersieht letztendlich das ganze Land.

['with widespread wings
sleepless and with frozen gaze
pointed at rubble

[422] Unlike the undivided heavens in *Die Neue Sonne*.

behind her the future piling up

slowly she flies higher

at last surveys the entire land'].

The work ends with a mantra of the title which transposes into *'mela, mela'* invoking Dürer's Melancholia; the listener is left with a series of disjointed snapshots that reflect the uncertainties that can be found in most of Bargeld's lyrics. His 21st century Everyman knows that he is on a journey but is uncertain of the significance of this journey or its final destination. These themes dominate *Alles Wieder Offen*, 2007.

4. e Through a glass darkly – a conclusion for Neubauten's texts to date

Music is never tragic, music is joy. But there are times it necessarily gives us a taste for death (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, p.299).

I conclude this analysis of Neubauten's texts with a consideration of the supporters' edition of the final album to date, *Alles Wieder Offen (AWO).* Here the lyrics suggest a quasi-Beckettian reflection on man's mortality, weight, circular existence and loneliness. However, without Beckett's gallows humour, some of the texts take the form of Bergman-like intense, conversations on the passing of time and approaching death. The universal Rilkean question of the *Duino Elegies*is is present –*'warum dann menschliches müssen'* [why do we have to be human] caught between the *schrecklich* angel and the *findigen* animal. The earlier, youthful fire and defiance have gone, although the need to slice away the flotsam and jetsam acquired en route remains a concern. In

this respect, a kind of defiance persists; for although much of the work contains reasoned resignation, this is by no means surrender; the work serves to fuel an urgency to find one's own way through. In *Birth, Lunch and Death*, we are assured that:

> *Ich kann nun mal keinem irgendetwas kritisch gegenüberknien*
> *Ich tauge auch nicht als Männchen einer Gottesanbeterin*
>
> ['I simply cannot kneel critically towards someone else/ I'm also not suited to be the male of a praying mantis'].

The familiar themes of waiting, (non)journeys, identity, hiding (in cosmos- *Venuskolonie* and obscure land - *Nagorny Karabach),*[423] failure and loneliness, which are to be found in other 21st century Neubauten texts, are examined. These deliberations (ironically, in the light of the title song's lyrics – 'it's all open again') are trapped in word lists and carry an acute awareness of time's shackles. The fretful obsession concerning uncertainty and incompleteness (*unvollständigkeit)* and the transitory nature of existence with its circular (eternal return) patterns are also present, especially in *Susej.* Here the concept is based on the idea of the old self and the present self:

> *an der selben stelle eingeladen*
> *an der du ausgestiegen bist*

[423] *Nagorny Karabach* suggests a metaphor for the band's former Berliner identity- '*Ob die andre Stadt mich lieb hat…?…In der Enklave meiner Wahl/in de ich mich verberg'* ['I wonder if the other city cares for me?/In the enclave of my choice/where I am hiding']. It can also refer to the enclave's physical and political dilemma caught between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

['loaded in at the same place

as where you got off'].

While the protagonist sings of '*unsre katastrophen'*, the Nazarene (the old man/the carpenter's son) is told to go home and to make everything work in reverse (as the title suggests):

ausgezehrt und abgemergelt [...]

Susej

Steig deinen schädelberg herunter […]

Sag den sternenzauber ab

Auch die magi können nach hause gehen

['Haggard and emaciated […]

Climb down from your skull hill […]

Call the astromagic off

Even the Magi can go home']

If this is interpreted as a quick glance up at the empty skies after the *Haus der Lüge/Was ist ist* party on the roof, then *Birth Lunch Death* confidently declares that '*es gibt überhaupt kein letztes Gericht'* ['there is no doomsday dinner whatsoever'].

There are also the familiar auditory/tactile, sensuous images, for example (*Ich Warte)*:

Ich warte auf Katzengangeslärm […]

[…] Ich warte auf die die taktlos erntet
Honigtriefend
Barfuss tanzend ohne Hemmschuh

['I am waiting for the cat's gait's racket […]
[…] I am waiting for her who tactlessly harvests
dripping honey
dancing barefoot without slipper']

The dense and playfully eclectic referencing continues to invite speculation on the Dadaists, dopamine and the Nazis, while Nietzsche is acknowledged with *'das Leben ist kein Irrtum, kein Irrtum und Musik'* ['life is not an error, not error and music']. The 'out there' of the cosmos suggests Trakl's (or Lorca's) ominously innocent moon, as the protagonist waits for '*die dunklen Massen zwischen den Sternen noch unentdeckt'* ['dark masses between the stars still undiscovered'] and the extra-Gaia utopian space of '*vollendete gegenwart'*. The reoccurring motif of shedding, hauling out, reducing, ridding one's self of unnecessary ballast is present, but no longer over a slow flame (as in *Redukt)* but as dissolving sugar or as vomit, gas, faeces and the final breath. Armageddon may not happen (*Wenn Dann)* but *'wir lieben musik und tanz'* (*Venuskolonie).* The use of lists encompasses both private and public

concerns; these include a new language, music, the morning, ideas, November heat, the victory and the hearth; they occur as *'der verlorenen Gegenstände'* ('displaced objects') *'unten ruhig ihre Bahnen ziehen'* ['calmly doing their rounds']. They are bound by prepositions and conjunctions ('*weilweilweil,' 'wenn dann'*) and woven through with dialogue between an unidentified speaker and you/her; possibly this is the 'one' who is waited for in *Ich Warte – 'auf die eine die die Sonne ausgräbt'* ['who excavates the sun'], *'das Gesetz der Gräber aufhebt'* ['who suspends the law of graves'] and who is persistently invited to come*:*

Komm früh mit den sternen
Mit den früchten und vor dem schnee

['Come early with the stars
With the fruit and before the snow']

warte nicht bis irgendwas passiert

[don't wait until something happens']
(Wenn Dann)

Komm mich mal besuchen
Ich hab' unendlich Zeit

['Come and pay me a visit
I have unlimited time']

(Nagorny Karabach)

Lass dir nicht von denen raten
Die ihren Winterspeck der Möglichkeiten
Längst verbraten haben

['Don't take the advice of those
who've long since frittered their winter fat
of opportunities']
(Weilweilweil)

bleib noch bis zum abend
bleib ein paar lange schäferstunden
schäferwochen
schäfermonate und jahre

['stay on until the evening
stay on for a couple of long bucolic hours
bucolic weeks
bucolic months and years']
(Venuskolonie)

Who is being addressed and who is speaking is left undefined. In *Von Wegen* the 'you' could be equally Death or a lover; however, the addressee is now invited, not to torch souls, but to:

Lös mich auf wie Zucker

Wenn du die Zeit dafür findest

Machs sanft und plötzlich

Im Handstreich

Oder einfach nur mit einem Blick

Es war alles schon mal da

Machs am besten noch während ich tanze

['Dissolve me like sugar

if you find the time for it

Do it gently and swiftly

By sleight of hand

Or simply with a single look

It was all there once before

Best you do it while I'm still dancing']

Several works pose questions of identity and loneliness ('*bleibst du jetzt hier*'); we are warned that the route is self-mined in the rear and the way forward in *Von Wegen* is '*irrwegig', 'abwegig' and 'umwegig'* ['erroneous, extraneous, tortuous']. The terrain, whether it is in flight or subterranean, is never easy; the future may devour one and the fear of being alone is couched in ambiguously religious terms; '*Warum hast du mich verlassen?'* ['Why have you deserted me?']

The journey for a word (the art of writing or the pursuit of the Word) in *Ich hatte ein Worte,* offers a positive note. Here the slippery business of owning and understanding the 'word' is full of contradictions for the elusive word is both '*selbstgezimmertes wie eine Rinne'* ['homespun like guttering'] and '*fremdes'* ['estranged'], '*schmal wie ein Einbaum'* ['narrow like a dugout'] yet '*rundes'* ['round'], both '*verdeckt'* ['concealed'] and '*entdeckt'* ['disclosed']**;** however, it is finally grasped again and will never be re -surrendered.

The circular, transitory existence of life is succinctly expressed in *Die Wellen* ['the waves']**,** a work which Bargeld says has been around since 1997; '*I just never knew what to do with it until Klaviermusik'* (email correspondence with author 20 August 2007). This work, which always opened the set for the *AWO* tour, echoes the sentiments of Arnold's 'Dover Beach' in its contemplation of waves from whose breaking spume -

> *Brechen dann die tausend Stimmen, meine, die von gestern, die ich nicht kannte, die sonst flüstern und alle anderen auch, und mittendrin der Nazarener;*
> *Immer wieder die famosen, fünfen, letzten Worte:*
> *Warum hast du mich verlassen?*
>
> ['a thousand voices break away, mine, yesterday's ones that I didn't know, that otherwise just whisper, and all the others too, and in their midst the Nazarene.

Over and over again those stupendous five final words: Why have you abandoned me?']

This work prepares us for the ultimate question posed in *Birth Lunch Death:*

Gibts noch was anders ausser
['Is there anything else besides']
Birth, Lunch and Death….

Ich ware ausser mir
Die Zukunftsangst sie frässe mich auf
Ich bin ausser mir
Ist jemand ausser mir noch hier?

['I would be beside myself
The fear of the future, it would devour me,
I am beside myself
Is there anyone beside me still here?']

Lets do it a Dada comes as a witty relief with its playful take on the nonsense word's sexual connotations and the persona's imaginary encounters (as a young apprentice?) with some of Dada's key participants:

Ich half Kurt beim Bauen seiner Häuser

['I helped Kurt build his houses'] [424]

Nos. 1, 2 and 3

Ich reichte ihm die Säge

Ich kochte ihm den Leim…

['I passed him the saw

I cooked him the glue'…]

Just you and me my darling

We know what it really means

Let's do it, let's do it, let's do it a Dada. (Chorus performed in English.)

Yet despite its sincerity and poignancy - for the protagonist regrets not being present to help George (Grosz) when he fell to his death on the cellar steps in Savignyplatz - there is also a sense that this work could be a playful allusion to the inaccessibility of any of Neubauten's texts and perhaps even to the irrelevance of striving for specific meaning. However, when the 'layers, years, annual rings' must finish, Bargeld concludes, may it be while he is still dancing and still addicted to desire 'as the only energy.' [425]

Ich Warte ends the album; Manfred Prescher notes that '*der Schluss der CD ist religiös'* ('the end of the CD is religious'*:* www.evolver.at/musik/) for he interprets that *der Nazarener* of the opening song, *Die Wellen*, is still waiting

[424] This refers to Kurt Schwitters' merzbau constructions.
[425] Similar to 'interim', dance has been present throughout as a preferred state of ecstasy, reduction and celebration, on ruins, in fire, through the central nervous system, of debility, inexhaustibly, tightly entwined and now as the preferred departure state.

for his father's help – '*warum hast du mich verlassen?'* However, Prescher speculates that perhaps it is '*weltliche Dinge und Gesten'* ['worldly things and gestures'] for which the song's protagonist waits in *Ich Warte.* Prescher's observation that '*Die Wellen und Ich Warte sind die Klammern, die das Album im Griff haben'* ('The Waves and I am Waiting are the clamps which hold the album in a grip') is an effective description which highlights the work's discursive focus on time's passage*;* age may not bring wisdom but the solidarity of the musicians' chant of '*Weil, weil, weil'* defiantly suggests the flip side of '*to be no part of it.'*

Alles Wieder Offen is an important work, both in its content and in its independent production and dissemination. The former plays on the band's past, offering fascinating opportunities for matching up songs with earlier works – for example, *Unvollständigkeit* with *Redukt, Nagorny Karabach* with *Armenia, Von Wegen* with *Sehnsucht* –hence, the whole suggests the '*unter schichten jahren jahresringen'* ['beneath layers, years, annual rings'] of *Susej* –itself born out of a past experiment. The final song (*Ich Wart*e) with its restrained vocalisation and Hacke's mandolin quietly foregrounds (utopian) music:

Ich warte warte immer weiter
Letztendlich auf Musik

['I'm waiting waiting incessantly
ultimately for music']

A new work is beyond the remit of this study, but if former strategies persist, it will pick up from where *Ich warte* finishes - '*ich warte immernoch'* ['I am waiting still'].

This chapter has discussed the Artaudian nature of Neubauten's textual themes (in striving against the conventional fayre of popular music). It concludes the central section (Part Two) on the group's destructive strategies as working examples of the philosophies and stories of the *Nachgeborenen* as discussed in Part One. These themes have been loosely catalogued under Berlin as squattermusik, the interim, the body, journeys and flight; they have contained a growing inter-textuality from many literary, mythological and scientific sources. The observation expressed below by Bargeld not only encapsulates much of Neubauten's attitude toward commercial, silencing music and their attempts to 'evade do-re-mi' but it also serves to introduce the final chapter. Chapter 10 analyses Neubauten's constructive strategies for independence as an interpretation of the future of music which Jacques Attali anticipates as *Composition* in *Noise: the Political Economy of Music* (1977). Attali's condemnation of what he calls *Repetition* music as a silencing commodity portends much of what Bargeld expresses below:

> I actually find a lot of pop music negative. Not because of the lyrical content, because it's certainly not that that defines the positiveness or negativity of music…..it so perfectly remains within the laws of how to create music and how to work with music that it basically just delivers one announcement after another, and that announcement is that things

have to be just like they are. The statement of pop music is simply that things are as they are, and there is no escape, and that is negative. What I mean by positive is obviously the opposite, and precisely because I am unable to define this opposite exactly makes it even more valid. If I were able to define it, I would just be stating again that there is no escape, no exit, no other way out (Spencer, 1998, p.206).

Part Three –**PERFORMING RECONSTRUCTION**

Risking another time to fail…..We know we have witnesses…

(Bargeld on webcasting during Phase 3)

Ancienne Belgique Brussels, 21.05.08 (Photograph taken by K Shryane for author)

Prologue: Composition

> 'I must create my own system or be enslaved by another man's'
>
> (Z'ev after Blake: *The Wire,* December 2003, p.27).[426]

The final chapter discusses what Neubauten have striven to construct after their destructive strategies for *Platz schaffen.* Unruh explained this in *No Beauty without Danger*:

> Einstürzende Neubauten means: the existing, the now, has had its time, it's used up, put into question. Something new is invented…It means constant change. 'You must destroy to build' – (2005, p.94).

Although this echoes Barber's description of Artaud's performance being in a constant state of self-destruction and self-reconstruction (Chapter 5, Prologue), my emphasis now moves to those practitioners who advocate the social, healing aspects of the Arts and, in particular, independence from the market or genres. Central to my discussion here is Jacques Attali and his argument in *Noise: the Political Economy of Music* (1977) for music's ability to offer a new, liberating mode of production and social relations.

[426] Ken Hollings, *Speaking in Tongues* in *The Wire,* December 2003, pp.26-29.

Chapter Ten: **'A Small Utopia'**

Bargeld's description of Grundstück at the Palast der Republik (interview with author 4 November 2004)

Palast der Republik (Photograph taken by author 11.04)

Introduction

My intention here is to analyse Neubauten's use of the World-Wide-Web to maintain autonomy over the research, creation and dissemination of their music between 2002 and 2008, free from the music industry and from dependence on any record label. My argument is that this strategy was one of *reconstruction* of a 'social sculpture' [427] (on the ground cleared by the previous strategies of de(con)struction) and that this reconstruction was a unique and innovative social act creating a cottage industry ethos and a participatory

[427] Zhu's description of the Supporter Initiative, interview with author, 11 October 2006.

listenership which has many similarities with Jacques Attali's hopes for the future of music as *Composition.*

I have divided the chapter into two main sections; the first provides a theoretical and practical context relevant to my argument, the second begins with examples of the group's textual references to independence and their previous strategies of independence; it then presents Neubauten's Supporter Initiative and its three key projects –*Grundstück, Musterhaus* and *Alles Wieder Offen* as working models for Attali's Composition.

1 Composition

> That the dark end of the music industry doesn't squeeze the little space there is left for musicians to live and work as they choose to and not according to some twerp in a marketing room
>
> (The Bays: email correspondence with author 14 June 2007).

The main thread which links Jacques Attali (my key theorist in this discussion) with the other theorists and artists cited below is the shared condemnation of the recording industry's standardisation of music to fit a formula, the market and a perceived audience. This condemnation was summed up by Bargeld at the end of Chapter 9 as 'one announcement after another and that announcement is that things have to be just like they are.'

There are extensive discourses on popular music's production and consumption. These discourses began with Adorno's (1941 &1944) indictment of popular music and the culture industry's repetitive standardisation and

pseudo-individualism which he saw resulting in effortless, regressive listening and a negation of any critical reflection. His pessimistic views have been frequently challenged by those who maintain the presence of active, disruptive subcultures and critical, discriminating listeners (who can create their own meanings) and by those who strive to minimise the conflict between commerce and creativity. (For example, Grossberg's claim that 'affective alliances' felt by fans can afford some sense of personal empowerment (Grossberg, 1992, pp.85-87.)[428] However, these discussions primarily focus the listener as a consumer of the finished recording and/or of the public gig, whereas I will discuss Neubauten's listener as a participant in the creation and dissemination of the music independent of the mainstream market and without the backing of a record label. It is within this context that I am using Attali's *Noise: the Political Economy of Music* (1977) because it offers an excellent theoretical framework for engagement with non-commercial music, especially within a cottage industry format. This format, I argue, can be applied to Neubauten's creation of their virtual and actual 'family' network between 2002 and 2008.

Attali's *Noise: the political economy of Music* (2006 edition) divides the development of music into four phases (*Sacrifice, Representation, Repetition* and *Composition*) [429] although for the purpose of this study, it is only the third phase and, in particular, the fourth, which are referenced. The advent of

[428] Keith Negus provides a useful overview of such arguments in *Popular Music in Theory, an introduction,* New England, Wesleyan University Press, 1996, pp.7-35.
[429] 'When power wants to make people forget, music is ritual sacrifice […]; when it wants them to believe, music is enactment, representation; when it wants to silence them, it is […] repetition […] beyond repetition, lies freedom […] Music is becoming composition' (J.Attali, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music,* 1977*,* (trans.) B. Massumi, Minneapolis, University Press, 2006, p. 20.

recording led Attali to describe *Repetition* as the silencing (through mass production) of all other noises. If *Representation* (phase two) had introduced the idea of music as a commodity, it had, at least, communicated an energy and a performing presence. *Repetition,* Attali (2006, p.106 & p.119) concludes, squeezes out error, stammering, hesitation and noise; gone is the festival and spectacle for abstract perfection with its 'stars […] disembodied, ground up, manipulated and reassembled on record […] in repetition that passes for identity, and no longer for difference'. In *Composition* however, the musician creates and organises sound for his own enjoyment and self-communication as a non-commercial act. What is heard by others is therefore a by-product of what the author wrote/performed for the sake of hearing it. This, Attali believes, leads to new social relations and an end to the distinction between musician and producer; here is music produced by the creator for his/herself, for pleasure outside of meaning, usage and exchange; 'to be lived not stockpiled' (Ibid., p.145).

It is this concept of 'new social relations' on which I intend to focus. Attali's Composition is not aiming for the 'extension of the bourgeois spectacle to all of the proletariat. It is the individual's conquest of his own body and potentials' (2006, p.135). Self awareness and self governance must precede any political change – a viewpoint also frequently expressed by Beuys and Cage in relation to their own work (see Chapter 1:3 *Utopia*). Thus my interpretation here of music's political struggle against commodification and its ability to empower the recipient is not primarily as Brecht's *Umfunktionierung* – as argued in Benjamin's 'The Author as Producer' 1934 (see below- b *actions*),

or as advocated by Cornelius Cardew (‘Stockhausen serves Imperialism’ 1974), but rather as a social act for inclusion and self change as expressed by Peter Sellars in his speech to the American Symphony Orchestra League in January 2007 (see Part One’s Prologue). The centrality of music’s social aspects were constantly expressed to me by the group during interviews; for example, Bargeld prioritised the social relationships inherent in *Grundstück* (3 November 2004), Alexander Hacke stated that the ‘social aspects’ were his driving force for being a musician (14 February 2007), Andrew Unruh described his communal drum tables as an inclusive social activity (14 February 2007) as well as the above mentioned use of ‘social sculpture’ by Zhu.

An important aspect of these new social relations is how the listener listens. Within ‘the network of composition’, Attali stressed the importance of the listener as an ‘operator’ – ‘to listen to music is to rewrite it’ (2006, p.135). Neubauten have always striven for the recipient’s willingness to work at the art of listening (see Chapter 3 and Chapter 6); however, during 2002-2008 Neubauten’s demands on the listener were not only in terms of reception but included a commitment to being online at certain times, a willingness to engage with the music’s process (and failures) during the web-streamed investigations and, in terms of distribution, to offer localised information or expertise. Hence, it is Attali’s reference to new social relations that can evolve from participatory listening (and thereby help to create a DIY network of support similar to that of a cottage industry) which is relevant to Neubauten’s recent strategies for independence. It is these aspects which are central to my

argument for the uniqueness and the innovation of Neubauten's web experiment.

I use the word 'uniqueness' with some hesitation because I do not intend to explore the Internet's use by other musicians, nor is it the purpose of my argument to examine the fractious question of the Internet's role in music ownership or dissemination (Bob Ostertag's *The Professional Suicide of a Recording Musician* (2007) offers an excellent argument here). The fact that the medium primarily provides a global display window, both for fledgling musicians hoping to attract a label and for encouraging music as shopping, is not contested. The argument here is that very few musicians have used the Internet as creatively as Neubauten did during 2002- 2008. I acknowledge the use by those international artists with large fan bases who have web-streamed 'live' concerts (for example, Paul McCartney's 1999 Cavern gig) [430] or provided pre-release or pre-gig album download offers like those by Wilco, Radiohead and Eno & Byrne.[431] But Neubauten's methods have less in common with these uses and more in common with artists, producers, distributors who were/are working on a grassroots level in making and sharing music with a known and sympathetic community – hence, my use of the descriptors - 'cottage-industry/extended family'. In view of this I argue that it is more relevant to cite the work of artists who in their different ways exemplify these particular aspects of Attali's anti-commodification strategies.

[430] See M. Duffett *Imagined Memories, Webcasting as a 'live' technology and the case of Little Big Gig. Information, Communication and Society*, vol.6, 3, Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2003, pp.307-325.

[431] There are many imaginative and interactive music/sound art endeavours; e.g. Apo33 who provide web-streamed interactive sound sites and RadioAct for online intervention from artists and non-artists (see LaBelle, 2006) or Michael Nyman's web project which encourages the public to send in compositions for his posted films.

The music of the Japanese collective, Les Razilles Dénudés (1967-1996), who evolved from the left-wing ethos of Kyoto's Doshishi University, only reached their followers through the trading and swapping of bootleg cassette tapes of their obscure, Artaudian gigs. In a rare article on the group, Alan Cummings (*The Wire*, November 2008, p.42) writes about the inbuilt fragility of these illicit cassettes (with their post-it note title attached) and cheap, disposable nature counterpointing the talismanic nature of the music. He cites too, the bonds of friendship created 'in a more innocent age' through cassette swapping and sharing and the effort and error involved in the recording.[432] The English rock-jazz improvisational group, The Bays (1999 -) are four musicians who come together only for live gigs; they do not rehearse, do not produce albums and have no set list; hence their music can only be accessed at their gigs or as free downloads. The group dismiss as myth the idea that *MySpace* and similar sites can be credited with liberating musicians from the clutches of the industry: 'The marketplace remains the same, the process of making music to sell unchanged in all but the cost of production and display' (email correspondence with author 14 June 2007). The Bays maintain that since they do not manufacture a product their 'music is about experience rather than shopping' (14 June 2007).

[432] Much as with the recording of Neubauten's 1980 'autobahn cavity' gig and *Alles was irgendwie nützt* (2006), Cummings, *Wow and Flutter* in *The Wire,* November, 2008, describes the act of listening to these bootlegs *as '*archaeology and imagination.' Apart from the bootlegs, the group did self-produce a small number of three CDs around 1991 which quickly went out of edition. However, a more recent commercial bootlegging has now grown up around them on ebay.

Two further examples offer evidence of independent production and dissemination; Chris Cutler with ReR (1978-), an 'artist-led service' which is as much about 'research as well as entertainment' (email correspondence with author 14 February 2008) [433] and Manchester's Factory Records (1978-92) who attempted to avoid the lure of wealth in recording and dissemination for 'it is not important to make money, it is important to make the record' (Erasmus, Shadowplayers, 2006). Cutler (14 February 2008) states that there will always be a community who want to move away from what he calls the 'fast food presentation' (of the Internet) back to the 'careful preparation' of the beautifully produced album which is what he aims for with Recommened Records.[434] Cutler stresses the 'recommended' of ReR means personal choice and never commercial viability. After a few years, artists in other countries contacted Cutler in order to set up their own branches of ReR and so a loose network of support was formed. Cutler calls his website a 'resource not just a specialist record supply service' and he invites feedback and ideas (14 February 2008).[435] Manchester's Factory Records also shared Cutler's ideal of disseminating music personally enjoyed through a cottage industry ethos but chose to focus entirely on the city of origin. The co-founders were exceptional in owning nothing of their artists' music; they allowed them

[433] For example, Cutler undertook for ReR, the research and compiling of Faust's work at Wümme, 1970-73 to create a box set of five works with an accompanying booklet in 2000 (see Chapter 2:3b *Die Kinder der Stockhausen*).
[434] ReR is one of the most respected surviving independent dissemination enterprises from the late 1970s. During the late 1970s there was an outbreak of local indie record making/distribution projects whose often politicised and dedicated initiators wanted to give musicians the time and space to create outside of the mass market limitations.
[435] One unusual rejection of both the Internet and cottage industry production is the work of Bill Drummond called 'Seventeen'. This he sees as circumventing what he regards as the dull levelling of Internet downloading. He issues open invitations in a location for 17 members of the public to create with him a piece of music which is then played once for the participants but never repeated or recorded.

to keep their rights to the material with any profits split 50:50.[436] The unique design of Peter Saville's record covers (which started with Joy Division's *Unknown Pleasures)* became a hallmark of Factory's attitude: 'we wanted to set the product apart from the processes of business…it didn't care if you bought it or not' (Saville in Rodley: BBC TV 2, 2 February 2008) as did the expectation that the groups cooperatively helped to assemble the record covers and packaging, which often cost more than the retail price of the enclosed disc.

These four examples can be read as small strikes against the bigger power structures of the cultural industry; such action Chris Cutler believes, will help to 'change, however slightly, the status quo' (email correspondence with author 12 February 2008). They are relevant here because, in their differing ways, they are about music as experience more than shopping (to re-appropriate The Bays' words) and music as research as well as entertainment (Cutler's words). These two dictums are central aspects of Neubauten's approach to their sound organisation and have been so since the communalism of 1980s Kreuzberg's squatter scene and Gudrun Gut's inter-changing, self-help local networks of artists and audience. Twenty years later this investigative approach continued with the group inviting its virtual witnesses to take part in the web-streamed sonic research in the Bunker- a space which looked more like a workshop than a recording studio.

[436] Tony Wilson, who co-founded the label in 1978 (with Alan Erasmus, Rob Gretton, Peter Saville and Martin Hannett) states on several occasions in Chris Rodley's BBC4's *Factory: Manchester from Joy Division to the Happy Mondays* (rescreened BBC2 2 February 2008) that Factory was never about making money; it was a utopian dream for the city he loved, an investment in its creativity and life, an experiment in human experiences; 'there was never any decision to make a profit.' Similarly, the Hacienda Club (FACT 51) which Wilson created as an outlet for the music and the people of Manchester was, for him, a 'public service.'

Although Neubauten's initial intention was to create a virtual community involved in the creating, sharing, organising and distributing of their music, they realised early on that a balancing of what was on offer virtually with actual experiences would be more satisfactory for the musicians and supporters. Hence it is possible to trace the development of their participatory listenership from a virtual dialogue (the web-streaming) to an actual one (*Grundstück*) and finally to a balance of the two (*Alles Wieder Offen)*.

2: To be no part of it

a. words... Ich würde keinen Industrieverträgunterschreiben....Wie Beuys es sagt; Man muss das Geld dort wegnehmen...

> ['I would never sign any industry contract….as Beuys said, we must remove the money (from Art)']
>
> (Bargeld, 1982: NBOA sourced 10 October 2006: see Chapter 1, *Architecture, Angels & Utopia*)

Before considering Neubauten's practical strategies through their Supporter Initiative it is important to acknowledge that their intention to maintain some autonomy over their music is present as a re-occurring textual theme as well as informing their practice. Their textual critique of the music industry includes *Die genaue Zeit* (1983: discussed in relation to Barthes' 'grain' in Chapter 7:1) and two late 1980s works. First, *Will will will kein bestandteil sein* (1987) ['want want want to be no part of it'] a frequently revisited anthem of independence and determination to extend music beyond the 'average' which now has a counterpart in *Weilweilweil* (2007) ['becausebecausebecause'],

secondly, *Prolog* (1989) which is quoted here in full in Matthew Partridge's translation. In performance a shattering, unholy noise drowns out Bargeld's voice at every 'but' –

We could, but –
Don't you think
That we could sign
So just one or two percent to us belong
And thousands will follow us along
Don't you think
We could bast ourselves in ether
And down to the last drops of our beings
Do service in the packing trade

We could, but-

Don't you think
That we could make our image
Ten thousandfold in colours false
Appear earth-shattering
Don't you think
That we could gild ourselves
On forty rungs
For the unsung common folk en masse
Be over many moons enthroned

We could, but-

Don't you think

That we could sign

Or even just resign our minds

And in this land

Like nine-days-wonders

Play up and down and back and forth

To return much later on

Completely stewed

And long-forgotten

Spinning just smaller circles

We could, but

b. actions...reconstructing a social sculpture

To imagine you own any piece of music is to miss the whole point…

(John Cage, *Lecture on Nothing,* 1950, in Kahn, 1999, p.184).

The following discussion of Neubauten's strategies for independence is presented in four strands - the three phase development of the World-Wide-Web based Supporter Initiative which stressed a new participatory spectatorship via the open studio and set up the questioning, answering, redefining relationship with their supporters; the *Grundstück* concert which

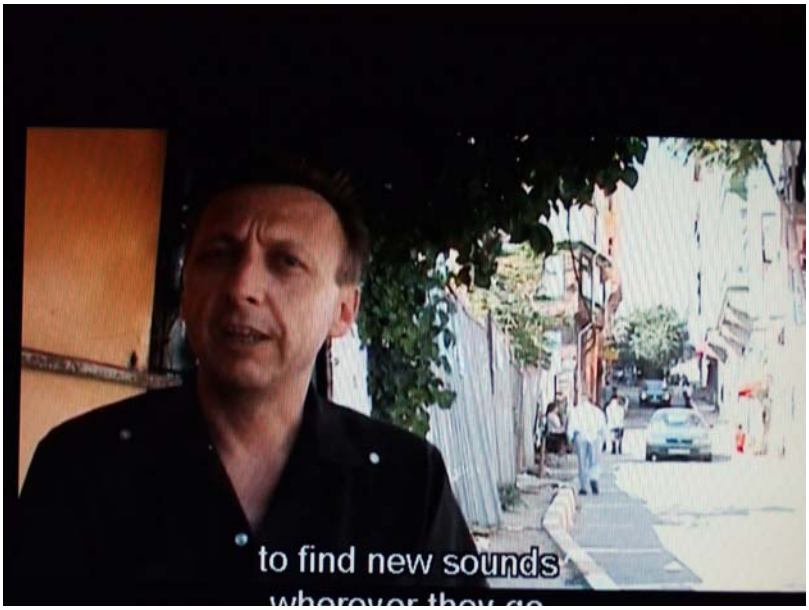
was a free, grass roots DIY event of social and artistic inclusion; the self-produced, limited editions of the *Musterhaus* series which stressed the importance of research, and the cottage industry dissemination and tour of *Alles Wieder Offen* which brought together the virtual and actual family into one project.

First, I will summarise Neubauten's earlier attempts at autonomy. These began with the self-produced cassette culture of the early 1980s and the *Eisengrau* (Bargeld's and Gut's second hand shop) label used to distribute Neubauten music and that of other local groups. There were brief but important connections with Klaus Maeck's *Rip Off* outlet and Alfred Hilsberg's label, *ZickZack* in Hamburg which produced *Kollaps*.[437] In the early 1980s an acrimonious relationship with Stevo's *Some Bizarre* label began which was followed by a more amiable one with *Mute*. (Both these labels, at this time, were part of the independent network and were outlets for Punk and Industrial music). There is also the long and successful relationship with Freibank, primarily a publishing company which gave Neubauten some self management. This was set up by Mark Chung, Neubauten's bassist with money earned from the group's composition for, and performances in, Peter Zadek's *Andi.* [438] For a period during the early 1990s, Neubauten also created an independent label, *Ego*, for the distribution mainly of radio work by the

[437] In many ways Maeck, who is also discussed in Chapter 2: 4: *Zurück zum Beton,* was the epitome of the young dilettante Punk producer of the late 1970s who grabbed an opportunity and learnt 'on the job'. Through shared squats, he came to know groups such as Abwärts and began a long association with, and dedication to, the work of Neubauten, including the role of manager until the initiation of Neubauten.org. He is the creator of two excellent resources on Neubauten- the book *Hör mit Schmerzen* and the VHS *Liedeslieder* .Maeck has also played a vital role in Freibank where he is now company manager with Mark Chung and continues to serve Neubauten's publishing interests.

[438] Chung had often acted as the group's negotiator in the early years because of his better grasp of English and his astute business abilities.

group, its individuals and associates that fell outside their more 'Art-Rock' range (also mentioned in Chapter 9:2 *Müllerarbeit*).



Klaus Maeck, *Neubauten.org on Tour,* DVD (de Piccotto, 2005) reproduced with permission from D.de Piccotto.

With these various attempts at self-management behind them, in August 2002, Neubauten made the decision to produce work without the backing of a record label and thus launched, on the Internet, *Neubauten.org Phase One.* This became known as the *Supporter Initiative*. It rejuvenated the loyal following which Neubauten had built up over the previous 22 years and through the greater exposure via the Internet (Neubauten had tended to produce only one album and one tour every 36 months); it enabled the group to secure a cohesive association of followers - many of whom worked voluntarily for or donated their specialist skills to the shared artistic endeavours of the group.[439] As already stated, I am not arguing here that

[439] This offers an interesting perspective on Attali's observation that making music for its own sake, which rejects the roles of specialisation and becomes a cooperative enterprise,

Neubauten's intentions and actions were wholly unique; many other groups have self-produced and self-distributed their music and (in recent times) used the Internet to reach their followers. However, there are two characteristics in Neubauten's approach and thinking which deserve recognition and hence, made the Supporter Initiative different.

The first is the group's *Subskribentenmodell.* This 'subscription format' meant that supporters paid 35 Euros or dollars directly to the band to produce an album for an agreed date while access was provided (during 2002-2007) via the Neubauten website, to the group's sometimes painful, often endearingly funny but sincere struggles to craft and organise the promised music. Bargeld defined the subscription model as 'an anti-record company model' (Terroriser, NBOA sourced 11 October 2006). This does seem to suggest a Benjaminian critique of freeing the work from subjection to a materialistic format (*The Author as Producer* (1934). However, Benjamin's advocacy of what Tretiakov distinguished as an '*operating'* writer from an '*informing'* writer (that is one whose mission is not to report but to struggle; not to play the spectator but to intervene actively – Benjamin, 2005, p.770) was intended as Marxist empowerment. There is no evidence to support a view that Neubauten held such politically affiliated opinions about their Supporter Initiative; rather, as stated above, their aim was to make the music they wished to make for those who wanted not only to listen to it, but to share in its creation (while remaining solvent). This argument rests on the second characteristic- the new role for the recipient created by the *Subskribentenmodell* – that of the *Unterstützer*

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operates best as localised activities in small communities where there is little or no distinction between consumption and production (2006, pp.133-148).

('supporter'). Andrea Schmid has stressed (email correspondence with author 13 July 2006) that this German term was deliberately selected as the alternative term *Anhänger,* normally seen in an English/German dictionary for a supporter, was not appropriate in this instance. *Anhänger* suggests a fan, a passive follower, a hanger-on, whereas *Unterstützer* describes a proactive person within a 'community' of like-minded others, who is actively supporting an idea or a project – a support (hence, a structure) from underneath.

This idea of being able to help the band make their music became a driving force for some followers. A few examples of such supporter input include the voluntary and dedicated efforts of American supporter, Abby Zane who has compiled an extensive archive of rare recordings and bootleg work which she makes available to other supporters for blanks and postage; she has also consistently used the Internet and Neubauten's websites to raise awareness and appreciation of their work through postings, distributing subscription flyers, answering questions, maintaining and establishing contacts. Another supporter, Karl J. Palouček, initiated and organised the creation of *Alles was irgendwie nützt* ['Everything that's of any use'].

In the year after *Grundstück*, and during Phase Two of Neubauten.org. Palouček, with a group of like-minded subscribers, including Zane, decided to produce a live Neubauten album independently of the band and created from supporter bootlegs. From about 50 submitted bootleg concert recordings, 27 tracks were selected by a jury (six representative supporters chosen by Palouček) that it was felt best articulated the musicians' development from

1980 to *Silence is Sexy* in 2000. The compilation was released to supporters on Neubauten's white label during the spring of 2006.The breadth of work on this illicit material confirmed the range of Neubauten's experimentation.[440] Apart from its considerable archive value, the recordings provided evidence of the informed interest and attention of supporters in the group's work. Palouĉek and Zane, at the time of writing, are compiling a sequel (*Wo ist Kanäle aufgehen und die Stimmen)* which will consist of *AWO Rampes*, again selected by a 'jury'.

Danielle de Picciotto's DVD documentary, *On Tour with Neubauten.org* (Monitorpop.de 2005) offers another example of supporter work; she filmed the 2004 tour while focusing on the development of the 2002 Supporter Initiative. A series of interviews demonstrated both the musicians' commitment to the project and that of a cross section of supporters from a range of countries, ages and professions. The frequently quoted attractions of being a supporter included seeing how a particular sound was created, the pleasure in researching the enigmatic lyrics and discussing meanings with others, sharing ideas of independence or a Cageian 'life-changing' response to one's environment, the supporter only post-show meetings with the musicians to further discuss the work or points arising from postings on the Forum, and, most importantly, 'chatting' with a community of other like-minded people from around the world.

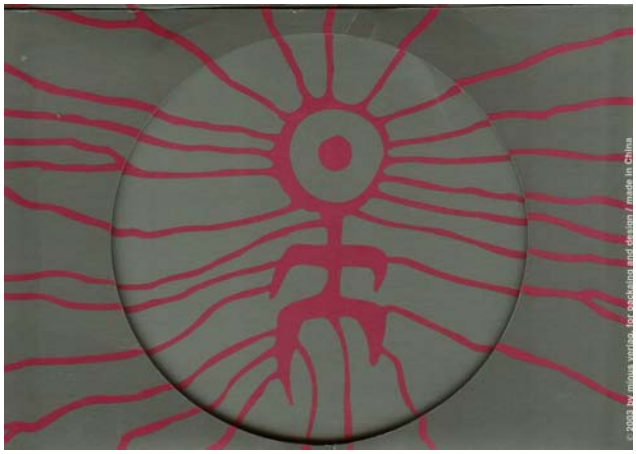
[440] The sleeve note apology for the poor quality of some of the pieces is unnecessary; the blurred cassette rawness and accompanying extraneous noise, captures the *energie und sehnsucht*. It is of interest to hear the rasping metal of the *Sehnsucht* track (31 October 1981, Wiesbaden) and to compare it to its Schubert-like sophisticated rendering with the Redux Orchestra (November 2005). Also of significance is the inclusion of *Sie* (a recording from Düsseldorf, 11 April 1993) because of the rarity of a live version of this complex multi-voiced song.

The supporters all stressed the importance of being active members, not passive consumers or followers; many spoke of the satisfaction in knowing that their money went directly to the artists for their work and not to an intermediary company. The musicians likewise expressed pleasure in knowing that the listeners and concert goers were informed, knew about the work, had probably watched its process and hence cared about the outcome far more than they might otherwise have done. Admittedly the de Picciotto film is hardly impartial, but it does reflect what seemed to be a genuine enthusiasm for the project on both sides, and a shared commitment to the music. The Forum (an ongoing facility for communication between the band and the supporters) and the Chat Room (available during the web-streamed rehearsals) were positive features for many supporters, especially the opportunity to discuss the work with musicians. Australian supporter, Elizabeth Cooke, who was responsible for Supporter Relations, explained (email correspondence with author 7 March 2006) that she had gained her position through 'chat' with Erin Zhu.

As much of the work for the band - the merchandise, logistics and design - was undertaken by supporter-volunteers; most of this support was then available, in 2007-08 for the dissemination, marketing and subsequent European tour of *Alles Wieder Offen.* These activities owed much of their success to active supporters who in each city or town provided information, interviews and links for the group to access. For example, one web communication from the musicians asked supporters to email in names and contact details of their local independent record retailers who may be

persuaded to take copies of the album. This extensive international 'Indie' list provided an invaluable resource in its own right. Supporters were also asked about any influence which they might have with their local radio stations or newspapers which could lead to an interview or article about *Alles Wieder Offen* and Neubauten.org. Through the unpaid efforts of Raquel Lains, a supporter from Lisbon and a freelance music promoter of *Lets Start a Fire,* the audiences at the Porto and Lisbon gigs were both informed and attentive and the sales of the *Alles Wieder Offen* album were very high.

The slightly transmuted supporter logo is testimony to this two-way relationship; it depicts the red sun/person (originally black, dancing and untethered) streaming roots, veins or branches from his/her body which reach out in all directions, perhaps like sound waves, supporting the puppet-figure as well as suggesting a reciprocal feeding in and out. Many supporters explained their freely offered commitment in terms of the positive impact of the group's work on their lives; Palouček described his commitment as a result of 'the group's steadfast adherence to high artistic standard' (15 May 2007). Zane explained (25 April 2007) that Neubauten's philosophy and music had a profound effect on the way she listened to and thought about sound; she also stressed the group's sincerity and hard work as admirable qualities and Lains expressed her identification with Neubauten as being centred on a shared stance which she summed up as 'I only promote what I like, the music I would buy for myself….I don't sell myself for the money I can earn' (12 March 2008).



Supporter Logo: image reproduced from author's *Supporters album 1#* with permission from A. Schmid

The idea for the Supporter Initiative was born during 2000-2001. It was the brainchild of Erin Zhu, whom Bargeld had met in 1999.[441] She is cited as an executive producer of much of the recent work and was the Webmaster of Neubauten.org.

Erin Zhu, Barcelona, 06.07 (Photograph taken by author)

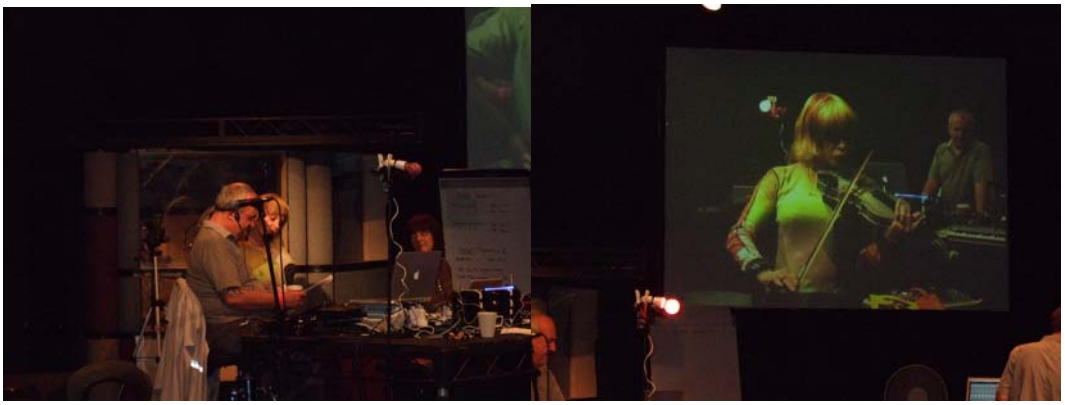
About 2000 followers signed up in 2002 to take part in Phase 1, to participate in the experience via live streaming and receive the results as downloads and exclusive recordings sent out on CD, on a self-produced white label.

[441] Erin is the Chinese-American daughter of Min Zhu the co-founder of WebEx, an Internet conferencing company.

(Neubauten had estimated that they needed one thousand subscribers to make the project viable.) One of the main attractions of the project for the subscribers was the already mentioned web-streaming; these live-stream sessions which showed the group in the working process, occurred about four times a year; the dates were emailed out to the supporters and posted on the website. Each period spanned about 6-8 days and was usually made up of one or two 90 minute sessions per day, mid afternoon or evening. As most of these were archived it was possible to watch them at a later date at any convenient time, hence, one could build up quite a comprehensive picture of how the group had constructed a particular piece.

The radical nature of this initiative lay in the open studio aspect of the work which made these webcasts much more than carefully prepared rehearsals. They seemed to epitomise Attali's hope for the future of music as 'no longer made to be represented or stockpiled, but for participation in collective play' (2006, p.141). Work was already taking place when the web cameras went live and usually continued afterwards, so the transmitted rehearsals were never self-contained, prepared units; they were unstaged and unedited. Nothing was added or manipulated in the timetable in order to transform the streamed 90 minutes into a performance - unless that was the rare intent as with the *Weingeister* piece of theatre for *Musterhaus 8* and the dress rehearsal for the mini tour of April 2007. Hence, sometimes the supporter would get an uneventful double session on the same overdubs or cascading metal bars; then Bargeld would apologetically comment 'another boring webcast' or 'everything will be better next time.' This added to the sense of

'liveness' and the authenticity of the struggle. My experiences of being in the Bunker during web-casting did not differ greatly from participating via my laptop but did differ from being present at the carefully staged-managed and timed rehearsals for Nico's *Desertshore* by Throbbing Gristle at the ICA in June 2007.



Rehearsal by Throbbing Gristle at ICA, 02.06.07 (Photograph taken by author)

These rehearsals did not invite discussion or share the problems with the viewers who were silent witnesses to a process which seemed all too easy and self-congratulatory.[442] In contrast Neubauten's webcasts consisted of startlingly honest, often slow, sometimes fraught, experiments which paid attention to minute detail and were conducted in German and English with Bargeld, as a moderator contextualising certain activities in English.

There was a sense that this was a snapshot of a group at work and not a demonstration for the spectator. The process was fully understandable and sympathetic for those who had been involved in the frustrating repetitiveness of, for example, a theatrical rehearsal; however for some supporters who enjoyed attending a polished rock-based gig, these webcasts were a negative

[442] Perhaps this was deemed necessary at £30 a seat.

and irrelevant experience. This was a risk which the group had acknowledged and which they admitted lost them some followers. Bargeld explained:

> They were more or less disappointed by the humanity of the band. That we were not the lords of darkness or the icons of the underground. And that we are not able to roll out brilliant pieces of music in a few moments….The illusion disappears as soon as you appear in this way. Of course, with many of the bands and projects built on shaky ground, no-one is usually prepared to give this kind of insight. On the contrary, a lot of money is spent to create a certain image of a band and you do not destroy that on purpose (Holga Wende, 2004, p.9).

As the idea of the open studio was not just to invite witnesses but also to stimulate comment, discussion and criticism during and after the sessions (in the Forum and Chat Room) video question and answer sessions were also set up with the musicians. Here the group declared their excitement at the surveillance of their work, claiming that it accelerated progress from their normal 36 months gestation time that it used to take them to produce an album.[443] Neubauten also maintained that the webcasts stopped arguments and encouraged attendance and punctuality. The concern, that one would imagine some artists would harbour that their mystique would be lost in the 'pixellated glare of all-access webcams' (Keenan, *The Wire,* February 2004, p.44) has again been tackled by Bargeld (Ibid.):

[443] During the 18 months of Phase Three they produced 15 Jewels downloads, launched the public performance DVD of *Grundstück*, created 8 Musterhaus CDs, undertook a mini European tour and produced the Supporters' Album *AWO* (with a DVD of the Dave-rehearsing of *3 Jewels)* and a smaller public version of *AWO.*

> We are giving away what a lot of other bands are very careful not to mystique and it undoubtedly did. There were supporters who absolutely did not like that aspect, who didn't want to know that we were able to play bad and make lots of mistakes…any kind of art is to do with communication, reacting to what was there before, to what was around you. Now we are in a constant answering questioning, redefining relationship. That's what we initiated. In the music industry, especially in the more substance-free parts of it, the artists usually try to present themselves as people who work in a totally autonomous autocratic situation where there are no influences, nothing before them and everything is birthed fully formed.

However, Neubauten's web-streaming did not entail the diminishing or vulgarisation of the aura [444] to which they aspired (the vulnerable, authentic, inquisitive artist) but rather confirmed a transmuted version of this as supporters believed that they were active co-participants of the webcasts in the same Central European Time zone and hence, were potential makers of meaning. The act of web-streaming seemed to blur the lines between the 'live' and the recorded. With the clear intentions of 'constant answering, questioning, redefining' (referenced above) thus foregrounded, and echoing Cutler's comments that ReR 'strives to help to define new problems through the presentation of imaginative solutions' (email correspondence 14 February 2008), the web-streaming was never in any danger of becoming the Reality

[444] A reference to Benjamin's 'The Work of Art in an Age of Mechanical Reproduction' 1935. www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works accessed 02.02.08.

Show which some feared. There was no manipulation, bad behaviour or implied disdain for the viewer, but an almost neurotic concern on behalf of the group to know what the supporter-viewer was thinking about the work and whether there were any positive or critical comments appearing on Zhu's laptop.[445] The musicians also always stressed the simplicity and cheapness of the technology used in the Neubauten enterprise, describing it as 'three webcams, USB cables and my (Zhu's) own laptop' (11 October 2006).[446] This was part of their intention to have a 'creative paradigm designed to be easily exploited by other fringe artists and musicians' (Keenan, *The Wire*, February 2004, p.44) Bargeld explained:

> the idea is to create a platform that we can broaden into other areas, one that other acts and people can copy as a model. If there is any future for peripheral musical identities, for people needing a social identity for their mind, then they need to look in different directions. What we are saying is don't start talking to record companies! Don't sign any publishing contracts! Do your shit alone (Ibid.).

[445] There are several examples which could be offered here: supporter encouragement of *Die Seltener Vogel* ensured the completion of this work when the group lost faith with it; supporter input corrected *X*, selected the final version of *Weilweilweil* and assisted with the outcome of *Unvollständigkeit* and *Blue Ice.* On occasions Bargeld would directly appeal 'we need your comments…we need to make some things different…' (20 February 2007). There were criticisms too; Musterhaus was deemed to have moved too far from the rock-arena for some supporters.

[446] This is very different to Duffett's description of the technology used for web-streaming *Little Big Gig* as 'extremely complex' (2003, p.310). He also states (p.322) that 'webcasting of concerts is not a job for amateurs' – obviously Neubauten were amateurs although they were never webstreaming high profiled concerts to thousands of fans worldwide. The web-streaming during Phase 1 often froze, staggered, lost sound or colour but this trial and error added to the group's vulnerability and exposure – and ironically, despite reminding the viewer of the medium - to the sense of liveness.

This use of web-streaming by Neubauten stands in stark contrast to that analysed by Duffett which he states 'gives consumers absolutely no opportunity to interact with each other or the performer' and also to his suggestion that webcasting could be just another 'corporate application of the Internet' (2003, p.308).

Phase Two of the Neubauten Supporter Project finished in August 2005 and the official site was taken down in September. The supporters' album of *Grundstück* (the focal point of Phase Two) and the DVD containing footage from the November 2004 performance in Berlin were dispatched to supporters in October 2005. Phase Two's 120 webcast hours had also included the introduction of solo workshops of sonic research which further declared the group's process – for example, Andrew Unruh's *Air Show* demonstration on how he builds and uses sonic objects to create ethereal sounds (see Chapter 6:3 *Interesting Corners and Sites*). These workshops continued into Phase Three with Arbeit's exploration entitled *Stupid Green,* followed by Bargeld experimenting with the Chinese duo FM3, Boris Wilsdorf's *ENgineering* in which he explained some of his approaches as the sound engineer and Hacke's electronic sound/visual investigation, *The Story of Electricity.*

Phase Three of the Supporter Project began in February 2006 with a speech of thanks and intent from Bargeld. He included the comment (regarding Phase One: August 2002 to September 2003) 'you helped us to make the record…you pushed us through' (12 February 2006: Neubauten.org). Bargeld expanded on this to stress that it was not just the money which was important

to the group but the time, interest and comments given by the supporters. [447] Phase 3 ended in October 2007 with the completion of *Alles Wieder Offen* and its distribution leaving a public site and one on MySpace. This phase had also made transparent the 'Dave' cards used by Neubauten as an investigative stimulus for musical ideas (see Chapter 6: 4 *The Unintentional*). These were used, in this case, for the creation of fifteen short pieces called *Jewels.* Initially these 'two/three minute miniatures' (Potomak, 2008) were monthly downloads for the supporters; at the close of Phase Three they were sent out to the supporters as an 'art object' compilation beautifully packaged with a detailed, illustrated booklet explaining the 'Dave' procedure and the particular card stimuli for each piece.[448]

2c: A Social Act

> On whose behalf do we act?
>
> (Peter Thomson on Brecht: 2000, p.98)[449]

The second key strand of my argument revolves round the development of the *actual* artist/spectator relationship with the *Grundstück* project of Phase 2 of the Supporter Initiative. *Grundstück* ('playing the building' was one of Bargeld's descriptions of the event) has been referred to several times in this

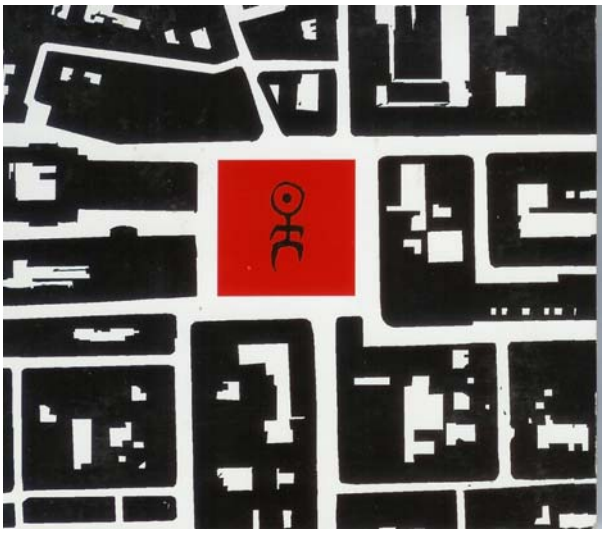
[447] Although Bargeld stressed in his opening Phase 3 speech the availability of offered interaction with fellow supporters and the group, Supporters' back stage passes had quietly diminished during the April 2007 tour. The group had previously expressed appreciation about meeting supporters in the supporter-only after-show meetings and having discussions on the work with them; this the musicians stated was far more satisfying than dealing with 'fans'. Perhaps the group felt that this facility had become too predictable by 2007.
[448] During this period Zhu had realised that it was possible to burn CDs of each gig and package these during the encore ready for sale 'on the door' after the show with all the individuality and faults of the night included. In their distinctive plain white covers on 'white' label, these recordings were popular with the supporters.
[449] Hodge, A. (ed.) *Twentieth Century Actor Training*, London, Routledge, 2000.

study; here a fuller account is offered which focuses the radical/experimental nature of the project as a free, independent concert for voice, machinery and architecture. The balancing of what was on offer virtually with actual experiences was always seen as very important by the group (see Zhu's comment in the Conclusion – *To infect others*). Hence, this was designed as a shared *actual* experience for the supporter community in return for their commitment to Phase One and their subscriptions to Phase Two.

In its first incarnation, *Grundstück* was the last work on the album *Perpetuum Mobile* (2004) where its multiple meanings were enhanced by the musicians sitting on the floor to play the metal. The work also employed a musical motif from Hanns Eisler's GDR national anthem *Auferstanden aus Ruinen* which translates as 'risen up out of the ruins'.[450] This adds an ironic twist both to the *Grundstück* event itself which was set among the ruins of the GDR's most prestigious site, Palast der Republik and to the group's insertion of their homemade logo in the gap left by the Berlin Republic's removal of the GDR's emblem.[451]

[450] Johannes Becher wrote the original poem to which Eisler composed the music.
[451] Unlike some of the West's make-over of monuments, plaques and names, this was not a tasteless act despite the similar use of gold and red; the illuminated figure resonated loss and melancholy across the Berlin winter night sky, not victory. The Palast der Republik (1976-2006) on former Marx-Engels Platz has been referenced as an iconic building in this study because of the debates which raged back and forth over the site during the years of the research (on Neubauten). A place of considerable importance, memories and meaning to many East Germans, it uniquely housed within its bronzed, mirrored windows, the East German Parliament side by side with leisure facilities such as a bowling alley, restaurants, bars, function rooms, art galleries and two large auditoriums. The West's slow and somewhat insensitive erasure of the building caused considerable protest and Ostalgia, especially coupled with the proposed restoration of the Imperial Schloss on the now flattened, sandy site.

Neubauten's home-made logo in the void of the GDR symbol on Palast der Republik at night.11.04 (Photograph taken by author)



Grundstück Poster, 2004, Johannes beck, minus design Berlin. Image reproduced with permission from J. Beck

The black and white poster design for *Grundstück* reinforced again the architectural/bodily thread in Neubauten's work. The image suggested both a city street plan with the centralised red square (Honecker's lost dream) and a ground plan for a building/person, complete with a red 'heart' and connecting lifelines representing the support systems and social bonds which Bargeld intended the event to emulate.[452]

[452] The sense of a floor piece, a building plot, a proposed piece of architecture or the ruined foundations of one, was reinforced by the use of this design to open the DVD recording of the Supporters' event. The camera zoomed in through the eye of the Neubauten logo, into the maze of lines toward the red square which opened out into the Palast itself; this opening sequence recalled that of Robert Wise's filmed version of West Side Story (1960).

Social Choir watching the playing of the building. Photograph by Stefan Koehler (from author's copy of *Grundstück* CD/DVD, 2005 with permission to use)

The event (which deconstructed the ethos of a rock gig) consisted of experimental, unfinished, untitled pieces which involved using the building and the supporters, with some key older works which were chosen to reflect aspects of Berlin's history. Bargeld stressed that, for him, the social aims of the concert were paramount and there was no direct political statement about the use of the site (interview with author 5 November 2004). His views can be appropriately summed up by the following quotation from John Cage:

> I am interested in social ends, but not in political ends, because politics deals with power, and society deals with numbers of individuals; […] I'm interested in society, not for purposes of power, but for purposes of cooperation and enjoyment (Kostelantz, 1987, p.274).[453]

[453] R. Kostelanetz, *Conversing with Cage,* London: Routledge, 1987. Bargeld has stated that personally he was not interested in the arguments for and against the retention/rebuilding of Palast or Schloss; he would prefer the site to be a park without a palace of any historical or political colour (ICA *Grundstück* screening talkback, 14 December 2006).

This concert, as already stated, was intended as a gift to the supporters for their subscriptions, interest, help and attention, as well as offering the opportunity to make noise together (as the Social Choir and on Unruh's drum tables), to meet each other and to reciprocate with practical help for the event. Neubauten had, through web-streaming, invited a new art of spectatorship (*Die Neue Zuschauerkunst)* and had created an international network of known and actively engaged supporters which rendered redundant the need for bouncers and barricades. Hence, a decision was taken to reconfigure the usual end-on rock concert space and to remove the bouncer-dominated-barricade between musicians and spectators. This enabled the main body of the concert to be performed in the round, on the shared first floor level through which the musicians and supporters could move freely. The playing of the building did entail the musicians moving onto the ground floor and the balcony; it was only the latter which was closed to any supporter not directly helping with that work because of the potential dangers of excess weight and movement in this area of the partially-degutted interior.

Supporters Rehearsal Schedule outside the Palast der Republik
(Photograph taken by the author, 03.11.04)

In the weeks before the event, postings appeared on the Neubauten.org site explaining the procedure if one wanted to become a member of the Social

Choir and requesting help with transport, accommodation, the get-in, the strike and refreshments. This enhanced the 'family and friends' grass roots feel of the event and created an ethos of shared responsibility and cooperation. During rehearsals, Bargeld, discussed this in architectural terms, talking about the supporters holding up this building (the musicians) - in this case, not one he wished to subvert or collapse.

Grundstück did involve some risk; there were the strategic problems in organising the first 100 supporters who arrived, as requested, at the Club Pfefferbank in former East Berlin, in order to be members of the social choir - let alone rehearsing them in two days - and early access to the site was problematic. This meant that the Social choir had to adapt immediately from the confined space of the small club to the massive hollow interior of the Palast; they did this with an apparent consolidated commitment for as supporters, they already had a stake in the work.[454] The success of the event, in these terms, is best exemplified by the only act of disobedience which did occur from the supporters.[455] This was an act of creative defiance by the 550 present, who had been provided with Unruh's 50 drum tables at the end of the concert and asked to join in the reprise of *Fiver* as a finale. This they did with undiluted enthusiasm. (A posting on the website had encouraged supporters to bring percussion-type sticks with them.) On Bargeld's countdown to cease

[454] Andrea Schmid explained that it was a risk too far for some of the group's closest helpers; some foresaw possible rock gig antisocial behaviour, or at least inconsiderate responses, from 550 visitors from around the world who were given free access to the group and to a ruined (potentially dangerous) site in the heart of Berlin (interview with author 3 November 2004).

[455] An act which recalls Neubauten's incantation to their spectators to '*disobey'* in *Installation No.1*.1996); Bargeld stressed how delighted he was with the Supporters' commitment to, and behaviour at *Grundstück* (interview with author 5 November 2004).

after several minutes (in order to close the evening) the supporters momentarily stopped their drumming and pounding, but once the musicians had left the performance circle, they renewed their efforts with fresh excitement and energy.[456] This act of disobedience continued for several minutes and the degutted building vibrated furiously (causing me to wonder if collapse was, after all imminent). Finally, the musicians returned. Bargeld's call for silence was obeyed immediately and the supporters departed leaving the Neubauten team clearly delighted with this spontaneous group act of music.

During the event Neubauten (Bargeld, in particular) constantly revealed themselves as vulnerable artists who had not yet finished some of the work; who were willing to restart a piece or admit their uncertainty/dissatisfaction; Bargeld's opening words - 'We are going to play a lot of things we don't know yet'- set the tone immediately. This use of exposure coupled with Bargeld's relaxed friendliness and willingness to give time to the supporters helped to create an aura radically different from that usually associated with the front man of a rock band. This different aura owed more to the role of a respected, experimental theatre director [457] or a dedicated teacher. His rehearsing of the 100 members of the Social Choir for two days before the get-in demonstrated this. He knew exactly when to praise and when to demand more, when to reprimand and when to accept, and his student-choir responded accordingly

[456] One young man proudly showed me his blisters the next day – wounds Bargeld would have been pleased with a decade earlier.
[457] Bargeld went on to direct Coetzee's *Waiting for the Barbarians* for the Salzburg Festival in the summer of 2005.

with high quality, committed work which was disciplined, focused and yet able to adapt to changes in both configuration and music.[458]

As already mentioned, the concert incorporated what Bargeld jokingly called some of Neubauten's greatest hits. This older set-list, with its strong Berlin bias, included *Redukt, Haus der Lüge, Ich gehe jetzt, Perpetuum Mobile, Youme and Meyou, Dead Friends, Die Befindlichkeit des Landes, Sabrina and Ein leichtes leises Säusein* as well as a choir version of *Was ist ist*. However, of greater interest were the experimental, unfinished, and for the most part, untitled pieces which Bargeld prioritised and rehearsed with the choir. Some of these works consisted of only a phrase or a non-phonemic utterance which was intoned or used as call and response with the choir. This improvisational approach within an empty, hollow space recalled the playing of the inner chamber of the autobahn flyover a quarter of a century earlier. Obviously there were many differences in the size of the site, the presence of witnesses and the resulting sound. The use of air compressors, the aircake, plastic bins, a jet turbine part, pipes and polystyrene created an ethereal, melancholic sound which was replicated by the half-demolished state of the once-grand building. Bargeld's range of vocal sounds included screaming, clicking, humming, throat-based guttural noises, as well as the intoning of incantatory sequences, all of which helped to create a sense of dislocation and loss. Despite a courting of stillness and silence there was still present the Rausch and the feeling that the '*neue Lied liegt auf der Zunge und brennt'* ['the new song lies on the tongue and burns'] (2003). Where fuller, new texts existed,

[458] Abby Zane, the leader of the women's choir explained that Bargeld's conducting was based on twenty different facial and hand signals (email correspondence with author 23 May 2007).

these often bore the old traces of Berlin's memory, history and loss; in addition there was also a new focus on the collective (perhaps reflecting the event's ethos) through the use of 'we'. One piece, temporarily called '*Wir sind viele'* ['we are many'], offered an extensive list of '*die drübern'* ['there-beyonders'] and '*die hinüberen'* ['other-siders'] and asks '*wann kommen die?'* ['when are they coming?'] [459] Similarly, in *Unseasonable Weather*, the consistent use of '*wir'* was striking, broken only toward the end by '*ich hab geträumt'* ['I had a dream'], a dream which cannot be grasped by the eye, ear, hands, tongue or heart. There were the lists, incomplete rag-picked phrases, questions, Dadaist word association and linguistic permutations, but there was little reference to apocalypse, cosmos or natural disaster – rather the texts conducted a gentler probing into the state of things (personal and public) with a familiar reference to dreams. Key themes were perpetual journeying or waiting, questioning of identity or ridding of ballast which later becomes so prevalent in *AllesWieder Offen*. However, there was also a visceral counterpart to this, created not only by the group's physical relationship with the site, but by the coldness of the November night and the sharp, directional white light which cast shadows and created impenetrable, dark recesses and eerie pockets of bottomless space receding from the safety of the small, peopled performance circle. The site, which was the essence of the failure of a national political utopia became a metaphor for Beuys' *Honigpumpe* (1977) and an actuality of his statement that 'everyone is an artist' (Fineberg, 1995, p.234). In stark contrast to Attali's critique of popular music as 'recuperated, colonized and sanitized' (2006, p.109) and the rock concert experience as-

[459] The frequent use of *wir* was echoed in the physical closeness of doer and watcher and in the use of call and response by Bargeld with the choir. The pronouns also recall the rhetoric of the Cold War and *Wende- wir-ihr, bei uns, bei euch, drüben*…

'only to be reduced to the role of an extra in the record or film that finances it' (2006, p.137) - everyone was a participant in *Grundstück*'s play. This play was especially captured in the Social Choir's version of the 1996 utopian work, *Was Ist Ist* with its connotations of Hesse (Chapter 9: introduction) and in the three playful vibrating metal tables of polystyrene chips (Chapter 6:3) which greeted the supporters as they arrived.

A key lengthy (mainly textless) piece involved the playing of amplified sections of rusting girders, abandoned metal banisters and exposed piping with Bargeld conducting the Choir who had been separated into four groups and allocated sounds, pitch, sequences and screams. The final permutation of this extensive work was a version of *Grundstück* which revisited the theme of Berlin's troubled ghosts of history not easily chased away. During this work the space came close to the Artaudian concept of a performance hangar as well as one big instrument encompassing everyone present. At times the atmosphere seemed oddly religious (in this former GDR Palast) with the use of call and response and the warm, human intoning mixing in the cold night air. Another extensive work (temporarily named *Fiver* due to its insistent beat but later called *Vox Populi* in deference to the Choir) had a dominant place in the event because of its energy, concentration, length, and the excitement created by the Choir's unified shout on Hacke's alternating fifth beat on a plastic container; this gave the work a strong ritualistic sense. As it grew and reinvented itself, it demonstrated a growing discipline and concentration, especially in the repeated, held silences and the choir's use of individual voice and sequencing. The work began like a vocal exercise and grew into a litany

with Bargeld's priestly intoning of '*wir sind gekommen die geschenke abzuholen'* ['we have come to collect the gifts'] juxtaposing with his vigorous conducting of the Choir. He led them through a rising *ah* as the musicians vocalised on *e,* then, unaccompanied, he intoned '*Ich wünschte einige zeitgenossen wären genau das: genossen, aus der zeit'* ['I wish some of my contemporaries were precisely that: conned temporarily'.] This statement dissolved into a series of throat, lip and tongue noises. [460] The complexity and length of this work alone offers evidence why *Grundstück* remains one of Neubauten's most important achievements. However, for the group, the achievement also lay in the fact that the concert had been managed, financed, and experienced totally independently with, and by the extended family.

2d. Musterhaus

> Where else but Berlin would you find five forty-something men in black suits bashing metal?
>
> (Barry Egan, producer: Tales from Berlin, BBC 4 filmed 02.06, transmitted 06.06, telephone interview 05.06)

The third strand involves the *Musterhaus* project which was started in April 2005; it particularly illustrates Hacke's statement –'what we do is research' (interview with author, 14 February 2006) as the intention for the eight *Musterhaus* albums was 'to give the band an outlet for more experimental

[460] The work has since undergone further metamorphosis as *Kernstück*, a slowed swirling cacophony of the choir's voices, on *Musterhaus 7*.

impulses and exploration' [461] and allow the musicians to move further away from the 'art-rock/electronic cabaret arena' of some recent work back into Musique Concrète noise and vocal research. The project was based again on subscription but kept separate from the supporters' site although this did provide a web link. The first two albums were *Anarchitektur* (May 2005) a 40 minute work (see Chapter 4: Conclusion- *Berlin- Metaphor and Myth*) with an evocative title dating from 1980 and *Unglaublicher Lärm* (July 2005, see Chapter 7:2 *Decomposing*) which was also one long track. Both *Musterhaus* One and Two consisted of layers of moving noise which flirted with Xenakis and Varèse; the voice was either peripheral or accidental. *Solo Bassfeder* (October 2005) the third album, was a collection of bass spring compositions by the individual members of the group. In February 2006, *Redux Orchestra vs. Einstürzende Neubauten* was issued as number four. This consisted of a selection of Neubauten's works used in the Watergate-Berlin concert of the previous November. These pieces (*Negativa Nein, Kein Bestandteil sein, Wüste and Installation No.1*) had been arranged for the Redux Orchestra (a predominantly jazz/minimalist group) and Neubauten by Ari Benjamin Meyer, the orchestra's leader. The first four albums alone offered a wide range of style and ability to adapt and play with form; they again demonstrate Neubauten's sustained commitment to sound experimentation. *Musterhaus* 5, 6, 7, and 8 continued with this experimentation with *Kassetten* as number five (complied of treated samples of the group's old 'concrete' recordings); the sixth, *Klaviermusik* featured Ari Benjamin Meyer at the piano with group

[461] www.answers.co./topic/einst-rzende-neubauten

members' individual piano compositions and *Stimmen Reste* (7) investigated the human voice varying from the endless mire of *Kernstück*, the treated version of *Grundstück's Vox Populi,* to the whispered repeat of *death*; the series ended in April 2007 with *Weingeister*'s barely audible sound effects of wine consumption.

Musterhaus Covers (Photograph taken by author, 05.05.07, used with permission from A. Schmid)

Each *Musterhaus* CD was carefully packaged using the ongoing motif of a Dadaist list of German words (the odd English word did randomly occur) from which individual letters were highlighted to create the current title. An explanation of the stimulus (usually from Bargeld) was included which enhanced the transparency since sections of the work had been web-streamed in rehearsal. Notwithstanding this, the project only ever gained at best, 500 subscribers. Erin Zhu (interview with author 11 October 2006) explained that there was some supporter dissatisfaction with the outlay of 100 Euros for four CDs per annum on the grounds that not all the eight works were

well received.[462] Despite the availability of a cheaper download-only option and the introduction of instalment payments, financially and critically *Musterhaus* was not successful. The majority of supporters, it seemed, did not want the intensity of experimentation to be found in a 40 minute single track of 'noise' electronics, Dadaist cut-ups of voices and found sound, to hear Neubauten tracks played on a piano or to listen to amplified wine tasting.[463] Neubauten did not view this as a failure but reiterated the pleasure which they found in the project and that it was always intended to have a limited life as a means to investigate the fusion of unlikely musical ideas and conventions.

Despite these minor disappointments, the group withstood the scrutiny of their process and work and indeed thrived on this scrutiny for six years. The success of *Grundstück* highlighted the fact that the group correctly gauged the desire of the supporters to be more than consumers and were able to utilise the reciprocal relationship which developed in a most positive way; this did demand considerable trust and confidence on behalf of the musicians and was probably only possible because the group had created, during the previous twenty-plus years, a committed and critical following who had already come to accept the group's transformations and experiments. The input from devotees such as Abby Zane and Karl J. Palouček helped to focus and maintain the wider supporter interest and contributions.[464] It is because of these successes that the relative 'failure' of *Musterhaus* seems baffling; out

[462] Several supporters with whom I have been in contact, and who expressed a loyal commitment to Neubauten, did not subscribe. The reasons were vague varying from lack of money to lack of awareness of the project or interest in such music.
[463] Zhu expressed some disappointment in a few supporters who persistently posted negative comments and demands for old 'head-banging' work (interview with author 11 October 2006).
[464] Much of this success lies with Bargeld's commanding performative persona, his constant creative input and his exacting requirement of attention to detail.

of 2000 signed up supporters why was only one quarter interested in the project? The only difference (*Musterhaus* work could be downloaded, it was 'art-house' packaged and limited, its rehearsals were web-cast) was that it was not rock gig material. Is the conclusion that Neubauten could be experimental and open with their process, their follower-relationship and their dissemination; they could expose their vulnerability and errors as long as the material remained rock-orientated? Was *Musterhaus* a step too far for the majority? If that was the case, Neubauten corrected the balance with *AWO.* They did push out some musical boundaries with the album's lyric content (Chapter 9:4e *Through a glass darkly*), sound organisation and in concert with the 'Dave Card' improvisations. But it was the active engagement between the musicians and the community of supporters during *AWO*'s gestation which rendered the work distinctive and vital.

2e. *We need your comments…we need to make some things different…*

(Bargeld's request to web-watchers during a rehearsal, 20.02.07)

The final strand of the argument concerns the independent creation, distribution and touring of *Alles Wieder Offen* carried out by the Neubauten team, who (as Attali advocates in Composition) blurred the roles of producers, distributors, tour managers and consumers by learning 'on the job' with their supporters*:*

> Composition can only emerge from the destruction of the preceding codes. Its beginning can be seen today, incoherent and fragile,

> subversive and threatened, in musicians' anxious questioning of repetition, in their works' foreshadowing of the death of the specialist, of the impossibility of the division of labour continuing as a mode of production (Attali, 2006, p.136).[465]

The closing statement on Mote Sinabel's issue of *The Attachment*, volume 6 (which contains a series of monochrome photographs of Neubauten by the Japanese artist) clarifies the situation:

> As a reaction against trends in the music industry which increasingly fails to protect and promote the interest of bands like Einstürzende Neubauten […] the supporter project aims to involve the listeners in the production process, applying their support toward the independent production and distribution of the next Neubauten album (author not identified: 2006).

Neubauten had involved their supporters virtually in the rehearsal process with the web-streamed open studio, then actually in organising and taking part in a site specific concert and now, both virtually and actually. Finally, the musicians asked the supporters to become involved in the production, distribution and touring aspects of a full album. *Alles Wieder Offen* provides

[465] The bridging of the divide between author and publisher, author and reader, poet and popularizer, Benjamin named as a revolutionary act 'because it challenges the professional and economic categories upon which the institutions of 'literature' and 'art' are erected' (www.typotheque.com/site/article).

the last strand of evidence in the argument for the uniqueness of Neubauten's strategies for independence.[466]

AWO was rehearsed via the web and financed entirely by supporters' subscriptions, hence, when it was released in the autumn of 2007 on Neubauten's own label, Potomak, it had no commercial record label involvement at all. The supporters' involvement went far beyond the financial.[467] They could choose to watch the album's development via web-casting, have live online input about this with the group which, at times, did influence the artistic decisions made, and they could volunteer for free (or for basic expenses incurred) any expertise or influence they might have within the music world, to aid the promotion and distribution of the work. This ranged from providing access to local radio stations or one's neighbourhood independent music retailer, to working in a more recognised capacity, with Constanze Pfeiffer (Andrea Schmid's co-worker) in order to set up databases of relevant media contacts in each major European city or town (as Raquel Lains did in Portugal). Further evidence of the two way relationship between the band and immediate associates and the supporters prior to the album's release could be found on the 'Work in Progress' pages on the *AWO* website archives during the late summer/autumn of 2007. One poignant posting from the musicians summed this up:

[466] The evocative title – 'everything open again'- was chosen quite late on (Zhu, conversation with author 14 June 2007); it resonates with grass roots availability, the open studio and new life. The work originated as a *Rampe* in Phase Two and was developed during the *Perpetuum Mobile* tour, 2004.

[467] Andrea Schmid also gave examples of expertise freely made available to her and the group who were learning the skills of record production by trial and error. For example, a German Indie record manager gave advice and access (to the German market) for free and Japansese artist-photographer, Mote Sinabel's art work and cover design was also a 'gift' (Schmid, conversation with author 21 December 2007).

> This is, as you might imagine, a delicate process, what with the ever lower album sales worldwide, our lack of experience and budget, and the exceedingly non-commercial nature of this (and every other) EN album. Fortunately, we're able to rely on a great number of people to encourage and help us as we stumble through this endeavour, and so this blog is a way for us to share some information of how we're doing this, keep people who're helping us posted on what's going on in the different territories, and get your feedback and reports and so on (www.alles-wieder-offen.com).

The website provided a running commentary which was often witty, peppered with varying degrees of desperation, the admission of fallibility, ignorance, confusion and celebration and appeared to make the group even more accessible. This also emphasised their strike against studios 'designed to shut out the outside world' (Bargeld, interview with author, 21.December 2007). Neubauten's actual and virtual studio, the Bunker-workshop in Berlin, had successfully challenged this concept with 'everything open again' (the album's title) for (virtual) witnesses to their process, its successes and failures.

A Final Diversion

The independence of the European tour of *Alles Wieder Offen* was one of its most important aspects for, in many ways, this was the culmination of the Supporter Initiative (especially as a previous attempt to tour independently

with *Perpetuum Mobile,* 2004 had resulted in relying on Mute's support). However, also noteworthy was the concert's style of performance which (although unable to develop the arena configuration of *Grundstück*) frequently deconstructed rock gig expectations. The ethos of the concert had a strong theatrical (and architectural) bias which was stated by the Expressionist backdrop of buildings reminiscent of *Dr. Caligari* or a Meidner cityscape before the collapse. This had been adapted from the *AWO* album cover by Mote Sinabel. The Meirkhol'd (Meyerhold)/Popova layout of machinery, household and sonic devices on two levels included some new merz objects and was overseen by six red-shaded, low slung lanterns. These echoed similar lanterns in the iconic photograph of Russolo with the Intonarumori; they also suggested a Cabaret setting.

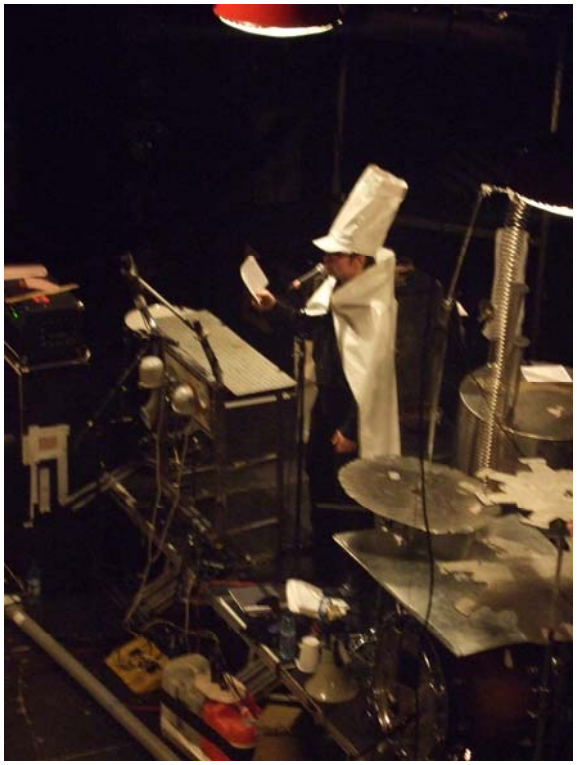
AWO Tour (Photographs taken by K. Shryane for author, 05.08)

These four elements - Expressionism, Constructivism, Cabaret and Russolo - seemed to give the work visually, a strong sense of the European, indeed, the German theatre which was far more pronounced than with previous concerts. The six musicians (Ash Wednesday was present) appeared as ironic figures in this metallic, geometric urbanscape, all too human as they moved from object to object playfully adopting roles- rock musicians (Hacke), Absurdist (Unruh), Fluxus experimenters (Moser and Arbeit) and, in the case of Bargeld, a Weimar cabaret singer or a character from a Fritz Lang film.

Bargeld, *AWO* Tour Brussels, 21.05.08 (Photograph taken by K Shryane for author)

Two key moments were: firstly, *Lets do it a dada* with Unruh's impression of Hugo Ball; he was suitably attired in a white sheet and tall hat and declaiming gibberish at speed, and secondly, a spontaneous diversion into the Dave

Cards which, each time, brought an unresolved cacophony of noise and purposeful, purposeless antics.



Unruh's Karawane, Brussels (Photograph taken by K Shryane for the author, 21.05.08)

There was a marked change in these performances in that Neubauten hardly played any of their 'greatest hits' despite a few shouted demands at Porto and London. With the attentive and appreciative Lisbon and Brussels audiences they were relaxed and open. It seemed that they were less concerned with pleasing old fans and more involved in playing the music which they wanted to hear themselves and which they had created with their supporters. Hence it is fitting to conclude this brief overview of the tour with another comment from Chris Cutler (email correspondence with author 14 February 2008):

Dave Card Experiments; AWO Tour, London, 22.05.08 (Photographs taken by K. Shryane for author)

You can produce great works and still starve to death in a garret while the world watches MTV- because MTV has the power. If we want power too, we have to take it. To have some say in what kind of music is released- and distributed- is to change however slightly, the status quo. And that's a work worth doing.

This chapter has argued that Neubauten attempted, through their creation of the Supporter Initiative, *Grundstück,* the *Musterhaus* series and *AWO,* to 'change however slightly, the status quo' (as stated by Cutler above) with varying degrees of success. The Supporter Initiative, especially through their World-Wide-Web open studio rehearsals, changed the performer-spectator relationship by inviting an active and participatory response and foregrounding the research and process of the work. The results of this could be seen at *Grundstück* which was built on this new spectatorship, and in the making and dissemination of *AWO.* Both thrived on the close relationship created with the supporters who were no longer merely shopping for a mysteriously finished product. In this sense the web-streaming and the processes involved in the two 'live' events, far from vulgarizing or diminishing Neubauten's aura, heightened and extended this as many of the supporters saw themselves as contributors.

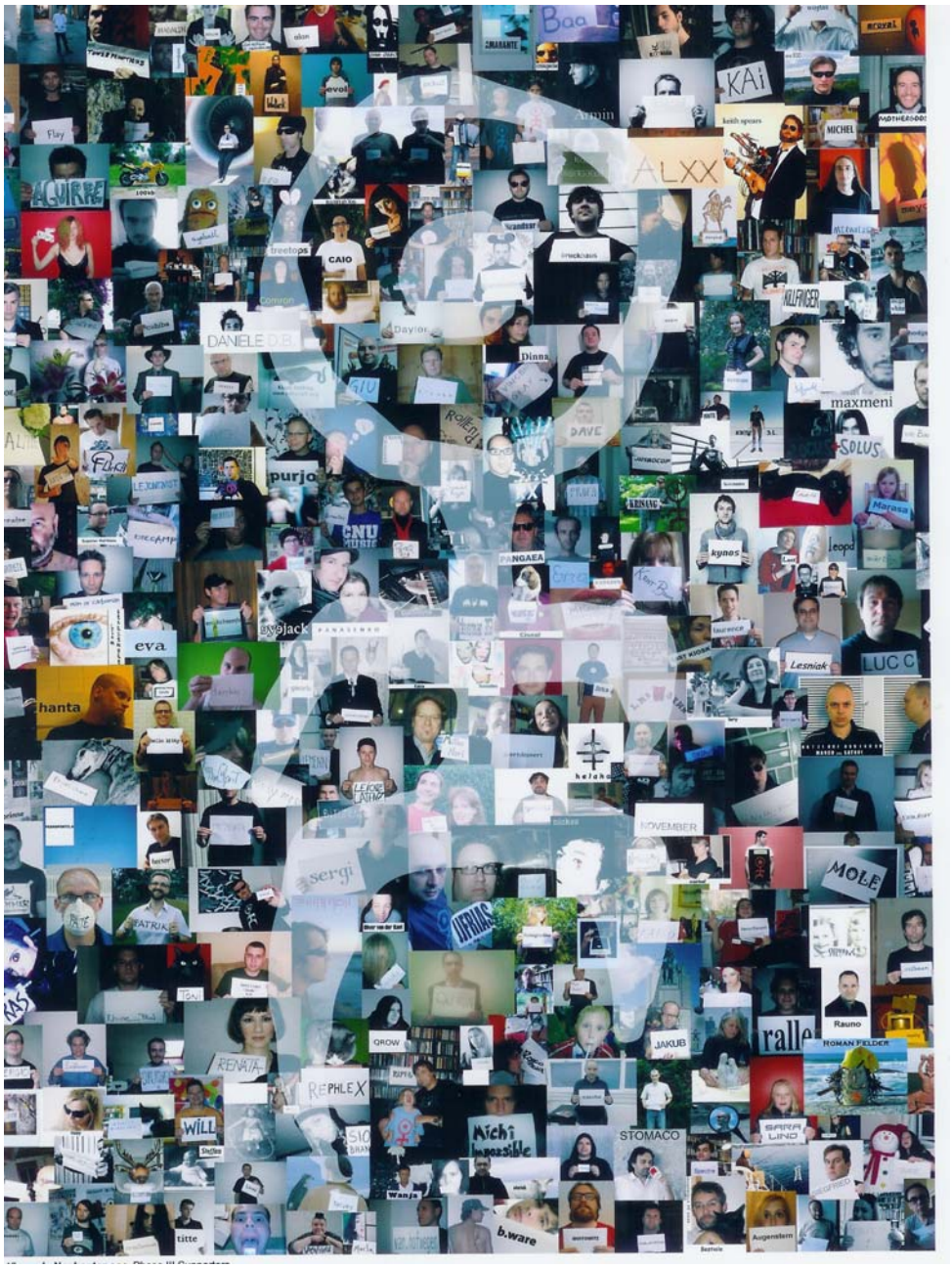
The *Musterhaus* experiment (despite giving the group more opportunity to experiment with the music which they wanted to hear) was less successful in changing listening habits. It did (along with the Dave-inspired *Jewels*) result in carefully-produced art objects which Cutler rightly says, are still desired by some fans. Erin Zhu also sees as an important legacy of the experiment, Neubauten's contribution to musicians 'hav(e)ing some say in what kind of music is released- and distributed' through the sharing of their supporter project experiences with other artists.

The title of this final chapter - *A Small Utopia*- (the result of an act of (social) reconstruction in the space cleared by the strategies against…) is both the small utopia of Attali's invoked utopian future for music which he envisaged as local networks of *Composition* and the tight-knit community of supporters which demonstrated its energy and commitment virtually and actually. Together these recall a similar sense of artistic communalism that was evident in the plethora of smaller, fluid, self-help networks clustered around the *Geniale Dilletanten* of 1980s Kreuzberg (an earlier experience of Attali's *Composition*).

Set for Porto 03. 05.08 (Photograph taken by author)

CONCLUSION

Everything Open Again



Collage of photographs submitted by supporters, created by Ian Williamson, 02.08, with permission to use from Ian Williamson,

I tell you: one must still have chaos in oneself to give birth to a dancing star

(Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathrusta*: Martin, 2005, p.13).

Music thrives on continuous contamination

(Zeitkratzer, Rob Young in *The Wire,* November 2008, p. 61).

To infect others…

Einstürzende Neubauten originated from the rock tradition which is notoriously ephemeral, full of '*9- day- wonders'* (*Kein Bestandteil sein)* such as Gang of Four, NEU! or This Heat who produced a small body of acclaimed work and then either disintegrate into trivia or disband. A few artists/performers such as Sonic Youth and David Thomas have been able to keep their artistic integrity, retaining a serious approach to experimentation whilst at the same time, still remaining linked to the rock tradition despite their multi-faceted output. Neubauten's oeuvre includes music created for dance companies, text based theatre, film, television, radio and site specific work; it ranges from 'industrial' metal percussion to lyrical lieder on the human condition; from Schwitters merz instrumentation and vocality, through abstract electronics to Dada-like happenings and Artaudian Total Theatre.

All of this then makes it surprising that no significant study of Neubauten has been produced. Brief references to Neubauten can be found in a few English language books (LaBelle, 2006 Hegarty, 2007, Cox & Warner, 2004); the longest of these are from Reynolds (2005) with about four pages and Broadhurst (1999) with seven pages. The comments are invariably praiseworthy and note the musicians' influence and originality but restrictively link them to musicians such as Throbbing Gristle, Test Department, SPK, Nurse with Wound or Nick Cave. Certainly these brief accolades place Neubauten in an international arena – where they deserve to belong but there is as yet little focus on their contribution to the prolific and influential work of German contemporary musicians since the mid 1960s. Hence, one outcome

of this research (apart from providing evidence that Neubauten's sonic forays have –as LaBelle suggested- (2006, p.224) not only defined a cultural moment but have also created new musical possibilities) is the recognition that there is a significant imbalance in Popular Music critical studies in favour of Anglo-American artists; this needs to be re-addressed not just for a German perspective but also for a mainland European one.

Defining or cataloguing Neubauten's music has always been problematic. This study has found categories such as Punk/Goth and Industrial/Noise as limiting (and too negative) to encompass the range of their work and has opted for a more open-ended definition associated with 'sound-organisers' and the milieu of Schaeffer, Cage and Xenakis. This recognises the celebratory play and research-based aspects of their music as well as the concerns for participatory listening and social change.

Neubauten initially were the product of a unique situation and time in Europe's troubled twentieth century. The long, triumphant period of German music with its outpourings of works and artists was fundamentally corrupted by the Third Reich; this resulted in German arts being despised and distrusted by the rest of Europe. The coming to terms with this and the similar fate of the German language, by those who were 'born later' is an important aspect of Neubauten's circumstances and environment. Hence, it is vital to recognise that Neubauten grew out of the post-1968 assertion that Germanness and its language could once again be a worthy medium for art. Secondly, the Cold War and the division of Germany and Berlin provided the unique place.

Isolated and force-fed West Berlin was more than the sum of its parts, being a symbol of both all that was good and all that was negative about post-war capitalism. These circumstances gave Neubauten their Dada-Punk leanings, their DIY culture, their textual concerns and an initial seeking out of what Jon Savage (in defining Industrialism) calls 'an even more comprehensive investigation of capitalism's decay' (1983, p.4). Perhaps most importantly they gave the group their name which invokes the history of Berlin as well as the writers (e.g. Benjamin, Artaud and Cioran) who influenced the group's musical philosophy. These factors are reflected in their consistent use of the German language and in their concentration (in their earliest pieces) on the themes of apocalypse and destruction as a direct reaction to the artificiality of West Berlin and the dominance of the occupiers' culture.

Apart from a brief citation in two works (Barber, 1993, p.69 and Reynolds 2005, p.484) the Artaudian aspects of Neubauten's work have also gone unrecognised. These are present in their physicality and play, in their extreme vocals, the use of the scream and of new instrumentation. They are present too, in the subject matter of their lyrics - a concern with man's relationship to the cosmos and to chaos, to reduction and excess. Artaud's influence can be seen in their earlier use of fire and riskful performative strategies, in their positive conception of the idea of disease, and the desire to 'infect others.' In fact, it seems to me that Neubauten succeed in meeting most, if not all, of Artaud's demands for a new performative style, with perhaps the exception of Artaud's sometimes expressed disgust with the human species. This commitment to an Artaudian approach permeates all their performance

strategies as expressed in Part Two where Artaud's ideas are the filter through which Neubauten's performance is discussed. Some of these ideas are still present in their 2008 *Alles Wieder Offen* concert approach, which provided a total theatrical experience, and in their desire to spread working methods for artistic independence. However, I have argued that with the Supporter Initiative, the emphasis shifted to the role of art as a socially inclusive, participatory experience as expressed by Joseph Beuys and John Cage and as encapsulated in Jacques Attali's *Composition*.

Neubauten's use of their immediate environment as site and resource and the creating of Schwitters merz-instruments for sounds are two of their most defining characteristics. Their list of instruments reads more like the contents of a technical manual rather than a musician's portfolio. They have performed in a rich variety of settings and on each occasion they have responded creatively to the individual situation of the building, literally playing and listening to the building's structures and surfaces. The inclusion of such elements has given their work a Cageian unpredictability, emphasising the elements of surprise, challenge and play which often has moved their music closer to improvisation.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it is imperative to recognise Neubauten's insistent attempts to remain independent of the consumerist model of music, best illustrated with their Internet-based, extended family and cottage industry model (reminiscent of 1980s Kreuzberg) to trial, create, produce and disseminate their work. Their concept of the open studio coupled

with a working, interactive relationship with their supporters is at the heart of their philosophy of independence. This openness combined with their integrity and thoroughness secured them a network of followers, many of whom actively contributed to the group's work and were not merely consumers of its end products.

There are no immediate plans for Neubauten to work together having completed the *AWO* tour (April-May 2008) until 2010 (for the thirtieth anniversary). Erin Zhu has set up OpenNote. com which is producing lessons and guidelines (learnt from Neubauten.org) for musicians who wish to work outside of the music industry.[468] It states that it is for independent musicians and 'those who work with them, listen to them and want to help support them.' Zhu's findings so far (email correspondence 26 November 2008) reinforce many of the observations recorded above:

> Online activities need to be connected to real life events to fully realize their potential […] communities are bigger than the sum of their individual members, the biggest part of neubauten.org […] was the supporter community and their involvement with each other because of this connecting point that we provided. We might communicate virtually but people still like to have 'stuff' […] the stuff needs to be more than just a physical copy of what can be sent digitally […]; indie artists need access to distribution and licencing opportunities, not just the old ones that only work with labels and old systems, but also new ones that are

[468] OpenNote is also a distributor; its first album was by White, released in April 2009.

> still being invented. Technology is only useful if people are able to use it […] whatever we design has to be very easily usable by the target audience.

This thesis began with a quote from Bargeld; it seems fitting to conclude with a repetition of its final statement: 'Music has to at least offer about five degrees of the horizon of utopia…it has to offer the unthinkable, something beyond language. This is what I call music' (Sharp, *The Wire,* October 1996, p. 21).

Postscript for 2009

Blixa Bargeld has a professorship at the San Francisco Art Institute where he leads an undergraduate studio practice course on Performance, Sound and Language. He performed *Execution of Precious Memories* with Nanos Operetta and KUNST-STOFF at Project Artaud Theater in San Francisco during November 2008 and has produced Shenggy and Shou Wang (White)'s first album in Berlin, released on OpenNote April 2009. He continues his *Rede* performances at various European art venues (most recently, Kontraste 09 at Krems, Austria and Copenhagen with Alva Noto) and has written a 'litany' called *Europa Kreuzweise* about the *Alles Wieder Offen* tour. In November 2009, he took part in work based on Russolo's Intonaurumori (also originally performed in San Francisco) at New York Town Hall with fifteen other musicians and sound artists.
During 2008-09 Alex Hacke with Danielle de Picciotto (sometimes with Marco Paschke, Lutz John and guest musicians like Unruh) toured their multi-media *Ship of Fools.* They are engaged in other film and installation work. Hacke won the award for best film music for *Fuori dalle corde* (Fulvio Bernasconi: Italie / Suisse) at the Festival International du Premier Film d'Annonay, France, 2009. *In Berlin,* a film by Ciro Cappelari and Michael Ballhaus, includes footage of Hacke and Picciotto's work. Hacke composed the soundtrack for the Finnish film, '*Last Cowboy Standing'* 2009.
Jochen Arbeit and Rudi Moser both released new albums during the late autumn of 2008.
Andrew Unruh continues to share his inclusive drum tables with the public around Europe. In September 2009, with Hacke, he provided the music for a showing of *'Kilink Istanbul'da'* at the Pergamonmuseum.
Boris Wilsdorf and Marco Paschke have transformed the Bunker studio into *andereBaustelle* and work there with a variety of musicians, including Tiger

Lilies, Hadewig Kras, White, Pan Sonic and Origami Boe; they are also doing the occasional webcast, e.g. with Jochan Arbeit and Cobra Killer (27.11.08).
Ende Neu was remastered and released on Potomak, July 2009.
Strategien gegen Architekturen 4 is due for release during 2009.
Uli M Schueppel's documentary of Neubauten's first East Berlin concert, *Elektrokohle (von Wegen)* was released in June 2009.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

A compressed timeline of Einstürzende Neubauten's work.

http://www.fromthearchives.com/en/chronology 1
offers a full discography and gig listing; it is an impressive document for the reader who requires more detailed chronological information about Neubauten's work.

On April 1, 1980, Einstürzende Neubauten made their first appearance in the Moon Club in Berlin. This date is considered to be the band's birthday. At that time the band was just a coincidental live set-up of the Dadaistic musical movement - the *Geniale Dilletanten*.This first line-up featured Beate Bartel and Gudrun Gut, Blixa Bargeld, and N.U. Unruh, who later went on to record music under the name of Einstürzende Neubauten. Bartel and Gut left the band after a short period of performing and founded the girl-band Mania D. A young sound technician and multi-instrumentalist Alexander von Borsig (Hacke), fifteen years old at that time, joined the band and became a long-time member.

In 1981 the percussionist F.M. Einheit (from the Hamburg band Abwärts) joined Einstürzende Neubauten and they released their first LP *Kollaps* on Zickzack. During their first German tour, Mark Chung (previously the bass player with Abwärts) joined the group. Klaus Maeck made a documentary video of this tour called *The Berlin Sickness.*

In 1983, Neubauten recorded their second album *Zeichnungen des Patienten O. T.* on Some Bizarre. Also in 1983 Bargeld joined the band The Birthday Party (featuring Nick Cave and Mick Harvey) as a guitarist. After it was disbanded a short time later, he became a long-time member of Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds. There were musical and acting contributions to Maeck's film, *Decorder* in 1983, also involvement with ICA's *Concerto for Machinery and Voice, 1984.*

With Neubauten's next album, *Halber Mensch* (1985) musical structure became more evident.The band played in Vancouver, Canada, sponsored by the German Goethe Institute as part of the German contribution to *Expo 86*. The one-hour film *Halber Mensch* (1986) by Sogo Ishii was released.The next two albums, *Fünf auf der nach oben offenen Richterskala* (1987) and *Haus der Lüge* (1989) were successful in the United States and Japan. During 1987 there was live music for Peter Zadek's *Andi* at the Deutsches Schauspielhaus, Hamburg and music for Ulf Gadd's ballet, *Armageddon* in Göteborg.

In 1988 Neubauten created music for Heiner Müller's *Description of a Picture* for the GDR radio and in 1989 for *Hamletmaschine* at the Deutsches Theater, Berlin; this was adapted for a radio version in 1991. The band image changed. Bargeld, formerly wearing punk/industrial style clothes, appeared at the live concerts in a suit. 1991 also saw the release of the double album best-of and rarities album, *Strategies against Architecture II.* In Vienna, 1992, Neubauten performed at The Academy of Visual Arts' 300th anniversary in a show by Erich Wonder, *Das Auge des Taifun.*

The next album *Tabula Rasa* (1993) was an important turning point for Neubauten because their music became softer and contained more electronic sound. There was also *Video Opera* with Nam June Paik at Donauesching Music Festival, then, in 1994 Schwab's *Faust* in Potsdam with Thieme directing (the group not only composed but, as with *Andi,* appeared on stage) and in 1995 they provided the music for *Katarsis Oedipus,* Copenhagen.

Mark Chung left the band after recording *Faustmusik* to work for Sony. He had created Freibank which enabled Neubauten to maintain a degree of independence over their musical material. F.M. Einheit, who contributed much to the music and sound of the band, left a short time later, during the recording of *Ende Neu*. After leaving Neubauten, Einheit continued his work in music and theatre, collaborating with various artists, such as Andreas Ammer, Phil Minton, KMFDM, Gry and Pan Sonic. A short time later, the band released the album *Ende Neu* (1996). A world tour followed the release. During this time, Jochen Arbeit and Rudi Moser joined the band.

During spring 2000, Neubauten celebrated their 20th birthday with a *20th anniversary tour,* playing in the Columbiahalle, Berlin on their exact birthday, April, 1 and released the album *Silence is Sexy*, followed by a world tour. From 2001, albums and web projects were partially produced and supported by Bargeld's wife Erin Zhu, who also served as webmaster of the official EN website.

In 2002, Einstürzende Neubauten began work on a new album without the backing of a record label, relying instead upon supporter participation. About 2,000 supporters signed up to support what became Phase I by paying 35 dollars or euros to participate in the experience and receive the results. Numerous sessions of the recording and creating of the next album, were translated to the supporters community via the Internet, as a streaming video. An exclusive *Supporter Album #1* was sent out to them in autumn 2003.

Bargeld left Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds in 2003. In order to go on tour, the band reneged on the idea of creating a supporter-only album, and cooperated with Mute Records for the tour and release of *Perpetuum Mobile* in 2004. The live shows of the *Perpetuum Mobile* Tour were recorded by the band's sound engineers, then burned on CDRs and sold directly after the concerts to the visitors. So, numerous 'official' live albums were created during this tour. This has continued with all other tours.

In November 2004, Grundstück took place at Berlin's Palast der Republik. The performance was filmed and was released on the exclusive supporters' DVD at the end of Phase II. The band also started a new experimental project called *Musterhaus* in early 2005; this finished in April 2007 with the eighth edition.

Phase II of the Neubauten Supporter's project finished in August of 2005 and the official site was taken down on the 20th of September. The supporter's album (titled *Grundstück*) and DVD (containing footage from the November 2004 *Grundstück* performance in Berlin) was dispatched in early October, 2005.

Phase III of the Supporter's project started on February 10th. One of the new additions to Phase III was a piece-by-piece album available only to supporters, consisting of 12 *Jewels* (eventually 15) as the band calls them. Starting in March, these downloadable tracks were released on or around the 15th of the month and are drawn from Bargeld's dreams and the 'Dave' cards. They are:

1. *Ich komme davon* (15 March 2006)
2. *Mei Ro* (15 April 2006)
3. *26 Riesen* (15 May 2006)
4. *Hawcubite* (15 June 2006)
5. *Die Libellen* (15 July 2006)
6. *Jeder Satz* (15 August 2006)
7. *Epharisto* (15 September 2006)
8. *Robert Fuzzo* (15 October 2006)
9. *Magyar Energia* (15 November 2006)
10. *Vicki* (15 December 2006)
11. *Ansonsten Dostojevsky* (16 January 2007)
12. *Die Ebenen werden nicht vermischt* (15 February 2007)
13. & 14. & 15. *Am I only Jesus, Blieb & I kissed Glenn Gould* (October 2007)

Alles was irgendwie nützt was completed in May 2006. The album consists of rare live tracks, handpicked by 6 Supporters of Phase 2. In October, Neubauten released a public DVD of Grundstück. In April 2007, the band undertook a small UK tour with appearances at Koko, London, Scotland's Triptych Festival and Minehead's ATPs.

Alles Wieder Offen was released in October 2007 for the Supporters with a slightly shorter version following for the public. This was an entirely independent production with dissemination aided by supporters who provided local networks, outlets and promotion. The Supporters version was accompanied by an optional DVD on the rehearsing of Jewels, 13, 14 & 15. In the autumn, 2007, the Supporters site of Phase 3 was taken down and a public site left in place. During January 2008 the group worked on an album of the complete Jewels and a fourth *Strategies Against Architecture*. *The Jewels* CD, accompanied by a booklet explaining the Dave cards, was released in April 2008.

A European tour to support *Alles Wieder Offen* took place during April and May 2008; it began in St. Petersburg and climaxed in the Columbiahalle, Berlin. Solo albums by Arbeit, Unruh, Hacke and Moser were on sale. See *Postscipt* above.

Members

- Blixa Bargeld: lead vocals, guitar, keyboards and lyrist. (real name: Christian Emmerich, original member)
- Alexander Hacke: bass, guitar, vocals (also known as Alexander von Borsig, since 1980)
- N.U. Unruh: special built instruments, percussion, vocals (real name: Andrew Chudy, original member)
- Jochen Arbeit: guitar, vocals (since 1997)
- Rudi Moser: specially built instruments, percussion, vocals (since 1997)

Other personalities

- Andrea Schmid (Jüpner): Bargeld's PA, now manages the group.
- Ash Wednesday: keyboards, electronics (touring member since 1997)
- Boris Wilsdorf : sound engineer
- Marco Paschke: sound technician
- Erin Zhu: executive producer, webmaster of neubauten.org.
- Ari Benjamin Meyers : frequent collaborator, with Redux Orchestra and on *Klavier*
- Klaus Maeck: former manager, now of Freibank
- Dr. Maria Zinfert: former P.A. and literary advisor
- Jessamy Calkin: former tour manager
- Matthew Partidge: translator
- Danielle de Picciotto: film production
- Bastian Ernicke: Andrea's assistant

Previous members

- Beate Bartel: bass (original member, only in the band for a short time in 1980)
- Gudrun Gut: keyboards (original member, only in the band for a short time in 1980)
- F.M. Einheit: percussion, vocals (real name: Frank Martin Strauß, 1981-1995)
- Mark Chung: bass, vocals (1981-1994) manager of Freibank
- Roland Wolf: keyboards, bass (replaced Mark Chung in 1995, died in a traffic accident short time later)

Discography

Albums remastered/released on Potomak

- *Kollaps* (1981)
- *Zeichnungen des Patienten O. T.* (1983)
- *Halber Mensch* (1985)
- *Fünf Auf der Nach Oben Offenen Richterskala* (1987)
- *Haus der Lüge* (1989)
- *Tabula Rasa* (1993)
- *Ende Neu* (1996)
- *Silence Is Sexy* (2000)
- *Perpetuum Mobile* (2004)
- *Alles Wieder Offen (*2007)
- *Jewels (2008)*

Other albums

These are compilations, live albums, limited, soundtracks and other full length releases

- *Stahlmusik* (1980) aufgenommen am 1.6.80 in einer Autobahnbrücke
- *Stahldubversions* (1982)
- *1981/1982 Livematerial* alias *Liveaufnahmen 07/81 bis 02/82* (1982)
- *Architekur & Geiselnahme* (27.11.82)
- *Strategies Against Architecture 80-83* (Strategien gegen Architekturen 80-83) (1984)
- *2X4 (1984)* (live album)
- *Verbrannte Erde* 1981-86. Stahlnetz.
- *EN with Altpunker*: live concert 21. Dezember 1989: Frekord.
- *Die Hamletmaschine* (1991) (music for a radio play)
- *Strategies Against Architecture II* (1991) (double album)
- *Faustmusik* (1996) (music for theatre)
- *Ende Neu Remixes* (1997)
- *Berlin Babylon* (2001)
- *Strategies Against Architecture III* (2001) (double album)
- *09-15-2000, Brussels* (2001) (double live album)
- *Gemini* (2003) (download-only release, double live album)
- *Supporter Album No. 1* (2003) (limited album for the supporters of phase 1 only)
- Numerous live albums from the *Perpetuum Mobile* Tour (February-May 2004)
- *Kalte Sterne -early recordings-* (2004) (re-issue of the early singles)
- *Grundstück* (2005) (limited album for the supporters of phase 2 only)
- *Musterhaus:Anarchitektur* (2005) (subscription-only; also available on tour)
- *Musterhaus:Unglaublicher Lärm* (2005) (subscription-only; also available on tour)
- Numerous live albums from the *25th Anniversary* Tour (March-April 2005)
- *Musterhaus:Solo Bassfeder* (2005) (subscription-only)
- *Musterhaus:Redux Orchestra vs. Einstürzende Neubauten* (2006) (subscription-only)
- *Musterhaus:Kassetten* (2006) (subscription-only)
- *Alles Was Irgendwie Nützt* (2006) (available only through neubauten.org)
- *Musterhaus:Klaviermusik*(2006) (subscription-only)
- *Jewels(album)* (2006-2007) (download-only album for supporters of phase 3)
- *Musterhaus:Stimmen Reste* (2006:Dec) (subscription only).
- *Musterhaus:Weingeister* (2007:Apr) (subscription only).
- Live albums from the mini 2007 tour.
- Live albums from the AWO tour (2008)

Singles

- ‘Für den Untergang’ (1980)
- ‘Kalte Sterne’ (1981)
- ‘Thirsty Animal’ (1982) (with Lydia Lunch & Rowland S. Howard)
- ‘Yü-Gung’ (1985)
- ‘Das Schaben’ (1985)
- ‘Feurio!’ (1989) (3-inch disc)
- ‘Nag Nag Nag/Wüste’ (1993) (3-inch disc available only with book on Neubauten)
- ‘Stella Maris’ (1996)
- ‘NNNAAAMMM’ (1996) Remixes (1997)
- ‘Perpetuum Mobile’ (2004) (download-only release)

EPs

- *Interim* (1993) (part of *Tabula Rasa* triptych)
- *Malediction* (1993) (part of *Tabula Rasa* triptych)
- *Total Eclipse Of The Sun* (1999)
- *Airplane Miniatures* (2003) (supporters-only download, Christmas present)
- *Attachment* selection volume 06 (2007)
- Seven versions of *Weil, Weil, Weil* (download- 2007)

Videos/DVDs (includes only material where Neubauten is the sole subject)

- *Halber Mensch (film)* (1986)
- *Liebeslieder* (1993)
- *Stella Maris* (1996)
- *Seele brennt -20th anniversary concert* (2000)
- *Grundstück DVD* (2005)
- *Palast der Republik DVD* (2006)
- *Einstürzende Neubauten on tour (2006)*
- *Three Jewels* (2007) (supporter only)
- *Von Wegen* (2009)

(Some of the above information has been borrowed from www.mute.com as accessed at NBOA during November 2006 and www.answers.com/topic/einst-rzende-neubauten as accessed 10 July 2006). See Postscript for update.

Appendix 2

Warten auf die Barbaren

This production was directed by Bargeld for the *Dichter zu Gast* programme at the Salzburg Festival for the summer of 2005. Bargeld was invited by the Director of Drama, Martin Kusej, to direct one of the three chosen works of J.M. Coetzee: the other two being *Schande* and *Im Herzen des Landes. Warten* ran for four performances at the Schauspielhaus during August; the production was revived in November 2006 at the Schauspielhaus studio in Hamburg. The cast included Thomas Thieme as the Magistrate and Hadewig Kras as the Barbarian Girl. The Boy was played by Fabian Taschwer in Salzburg and Caspar Lambers in Hamburg. The

Voices were Bargeld, Simon Newby, Lars Rudolph and Volker Spengler; Bargeld composed the music and Lutz John, the design and lighting. Maria Zinfert adapted the novel for this production. Lutz John has frequently lit Neubauten concerts; his design for *AWO* is particularly striking. Here it was his use of sudden painfully bright light and projected shadows of the few objects (e.g. the flowers in a vase and the Magistrate's hat) which were so effective.

The relevance of this work (although it involved only Bargeld, Zinfert and Lutz) is considerable. Bargeld chose to present the allegorical novel as a condensed dramatic reading using multi-layered symbolism and an interplay of bodiless voices, screams and noise, which Sabrine Leucht (8 August 2005) called '*halb unterwegs zur Musik' (half-way to music).*
The liminal ice white topography was blank like the Magistrate's 256 slips; it was both useful and beautiful. It bore all the hallmarks of Neubauten's sonic and textual concerns, while suggesting close ties with Müller's landscapes of death and Beckettian wastelands of cyclical waiting. As this was an *Erinnerung an Texas* (Memory text) it grappled with mankind's need to leave marks while indulging in the erasure of traces:
Magistrate: History will bear me out.
Joll: There will be no history (Coetzee, 2004, p.114).
Hence, there were the familiar Benjaminian concerns of history and ruins but if earlier Neubauten work had suggested a way through the ruins, this (and *AWO)* seemed to be settling for a space among them and '*to put people there'* as the Magistrate advises the Girl.
The dominating trench, which stretched width ways across the traverse staging, was filled with polystyrene chips; it offered multi-meanings as a frontier, a mass grave of genocide, water for baptism, torture by downing, a rite of passage and the layers of the past with the chips representing the found slips which the Magistrate struggles to decipher.
The sparse images were powerful; e.g. the clown's red nose suggested the foolish, fond, old fiddling man of Lear or Krapp; this was reiterated in Thieme's bear-like lumbering and struggles with failure (to love), torture and humiliation. Zinfert's constructions of lists- what she called 'sound scenarios' (email correspondence with author 10-14 September 2005) echoed Bargeld's own textual structurings as well as creating the absurdity of the human journey- '*in the end we stand as at the beginning and wait for it all to start anew.'* (Flieher on Bargeld's interpretation: 5 August 2005). These are sentiments found in *Ich Warte* and *Susej* (2007).
The inter-texting of the political body and the human was present; it focused the repression of the smallest social act which rendered an age of civilization '*als die wahre Barbarei'/*as the true barbarity. The use of repetition, (Müller-like) snapshot on snapshot (what Judith Schmitzberger (Kurier, 5 August 2005) called '*flashbulbs on the text, scenes flare up, glaring pictures of horror'*), the juxtaposing of the scream and silence and the keying of the line (spoken by Newby in English) '*Truly the world might belong to the singers and the dancers'* all bear significance within the context of Neubauten's concerns and development. In terms of both content and style, my several viewings of this work aided and enriched my overall understanding of Neubauten's work.

Appendix 3

The cast for Jo Mitchell's reconstruction of the 1984 ICA *Concerto for Voice and Machinery* (February 2007) was as follows:
Marc Chung- Joel Cahen, Alex Hacke- Andrew Kerr, Gila Groeger- Gaia Giacometti, Stevo- Murray Ward, Genius P Orridge- Bernie Kerr, F.M. Einheit- Nick Rawling, Marti Scheller- Yorgos Bakalos, Matt Moffat- Tanais Fox, Frank Tovey- Wajid Yaseen and Blixa Bargeld- Jacopo Miliani.

Appendix 4

The following poem was written by a class of 8-9 year olds at Whitwick St John the Baptist C of E Primary School, Leicestershire during May 2006; one of the two stimuli was *Steh auf Berlin.*

She is Happy like Roadworks

She is happy like roadworks
Gentle like a machine gun
She is a hoover, a digger
Something on TV, like winding down air.

She sings like my mum, prancing around like cheeks
Wearing a flowery dress, banging on equipment.
A building site with glistening white teeth
Shouting all the time while on the beach.

Bizarre person singing sad, gentle, wild words.
She is bored, a crazy building
Weird and screaming
She is glum and cannot slap her voice.

Pink jacket on brown hair
Cuckoo lands, sad and lost.
Torpedoes, bells and bangers getting cheerful
Black spikey things, winning gold.

Upset, lonely singer is dead.
Aftershave smashed the windscreen.
Fire in the country
Blew up loud people.

Sister's going, 'Oh, my, he's mad!'
He's shouting, 'I'm going to remember!
Right here! Hey!'
Firebell?
But, hey, let's dance!

Quite sad, singing rock and roll.
She likes it crazy, mad.
Happy to be awake,
Her voice sounds like a drill.

They are a spoon and very weak.
Starts with a singer,
A day dream tune of electrocution,
Calming machine gun noises.

A beat in the tune.
Happy tools, sad roadworks.
Jack hammer snoring –
He's enjoying himself!

She's beautiful, scary, she breathes fire
Thinking about love, shooting dreams in the eye.
Go to a mental home, running from a train
The music is dancing.

She's a blizzard
Her head is like roadworks.
Her feet make drumming noises,
Everytime she speaks she roars.

A drill wears a ribbon.
Rock monster singing.
A tank coming, it trips her over.
Drumming wears a gown.

Gently lying on a soft tight headache
Branches of the trees need to hide.
Confusion, questions circle in the sky.
Bees buzz, birds escape.

Petals fall, banging, cutting through
Relaxing with the traffic.
Twinkling through the blistering heat
Clouds overhead, angry and painful.

With thanks to their teacher, Corinne Clark for allowing me to include this work.

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Throbbing Gristle (1978). *D.o.A third and final report,* Industrial Records.
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RADIO/TELEVISION programmes

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BBC TV 2, *Berlin,* Matt Frei, 21.11.09 at 19.45.
BBC Radio 4, *Berlin,* 17.11.08-21.11.08, 13.30.*Berlin Diary, Camera Obscura, Funeral in Berlin, The Wall, The Mural at Frau Krauser.*
BBC Radio 2, *Berlin soundz decadent,* 02.01.07 at 20.30, producer Clive Stanhope.
BBC Radio 4, *Bernstein in Berlin,* 29.08.08 at 13.30, presenter, Paul Gambaccini, (concert for the fall of the wall).
BBC Radio 3, *Between the Ears, Steamboat Kurt (Schwitters),* 24.02.07 at 21.15, presenter, Ian McMillian.
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BBC TV 2, Factory: *from Joy Division to the Happy Mondays,* rescreened 02.02.07 at 23.10, director, Chris Rodley.
BBC Radio Drama on 3: *The Fiery World*, 04.03.07 at 20.00, producer, Nicolas Soames.
BBC Radio 4, *Great lives: Ian Curtis,* presented by Simon Armitage, 05.05.08.
BBC TV 4 *Krautrock: the Rebirth of Germany,* 23.10.09 at 21-23.
BBC Radio 3, *Mixing it - Berlin revisited,* Radio 3. 16.02. 07, presenters, Mark Russell & Robert Sandall.
BBC Radio 4, *1968: Philosophy in the Street*, 30.04.08 at 11.00 (no other information).
BBC Radio 4, *The Sixty-Eighters at Sixty,* David Aaronovitch in Berlin, 29.12.08 at 23.30, producer, Phil Tinline.
BBC Radio 3, *Stockhausen: Music Matters,* Tom Service, 15.12.07 at 12.15-13.00

BBC Radio 3, *The Struggle for Language: the new German,* 21.01.07 at 21.30, producer, Chris Bowlby.
BBC TV 4. *Tales from Berlin*, 20.06.06 at 21.00, presenters, Kathy Wark & Toby Aimes. Producer, Barry Egan.
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Journals and Articles

Neubauten Berlin Office Archive (Schwedterstrasse 52, Berlin, 10435) has supplied most of my unbound (and most useful) material consisting of interviews, articles, reviews, photographs, programmes, scripts and magazines, 1980-2007. If these were dated/referenced then this has been acknowledged in the main body of the work; these articles are marked by **NBOA**; the access date is attached.
Andrea Schmid is thanked for this generous access. Newspaper reviews referenced in the Appendices are also from this source;
Frankfurter Rundschau: Dieter Kranz, Aus dem Nachlass. 02.11.94 on *Faust.*
Kurier Salzburg: Judith Schmitzberger. 05.08.05.
Salzburger Nachrichten: Bernhard Flieher. 05.08.05.
Süddentsche Zeitung: Sabrine Leucht. 08.08.05 all above on *Warten auf die Barbaren*.

New Musical Express articles from this source listed by author:
Let's hear it for the Untergang Show, Chris Bohn & Anton Corbijn, 05.02.83.
A Waltz through the Hardcore, Chris Bohn/Biba Kopf, 15.09.84.
Berlin of the Mind, Dele Fadele, 19.09.87.
Trans Europe Excess, Don Watson & Anton Corbijn, 06.04.85.

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Guitarist (1997). *Anti-Guitarist* August 1997, pp.151-54. NBOA. (no other available information).
Pina Bausch and the Post Modern Aesthetics of Tanztheater, NBOA, no known date/author.
Nick Cave*, an Intertextual Performer*, NBOA, no known date/author.
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Debatte: Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe, Carfax Publishing Ltd.

Rodden,J. (2004). *Politics & the German Language,* vol. 12.1.pp.46-63
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Duffett, M. (2003).*Imagined Memories, Webcasting as a 'live' technology and the case of Little Big Gig.* Information, Communication and Society, vol.6, 3. Routledge, Taylor & Francis, pp.307-325.
Holt, F. *Kreuzberg Activists: Musical Performance as Social Vehicle,* Popular Music and Society, vol. 30, No. 4, October 2007, pp. 469-492.
Hvatin, E. *The Scream* in Performance Research 2/1 (1997) *Letters from Europe,* London. Routledge, pp.82-91.
Primoversi, P. *Theatre of Multiple Voices* in Performance Research 8/1 (2003) *Voices,* London. Taylor and Francis Ltd. pp.61-73
Robb, D. (1999) *Literary Heritage in the Clowns-Liedertheater of Wenzel and Mensching,* German Life and Letters, 52.3, July 1999, Oxford, Blackwell Publishers Ltd. pp.382-397.
Savage, J. *Ian Curtis, Dark Star* (2007). The Independent on Sunday, 07.10.07.
Shepherd, S. *Voice, Writing and Noise* in Performance Research 8/1 (2003) *Voices,* London. Taylor and Francis Ltd. (no page numbers)
Symonds, D. (2007). *The Corporeality of Musical Expression: the grain of the voice and the actor-musician*: Studies in Musical Theatre, vol. 1 no. 2, Intellect Ltd. pp.167-181.

Popular Music Journal, German popular music edition, vol.17: 3. March (1998) CUP.
In particular, the following articles:
Haas and Reszel, *Whatever happened to…the decline and renaissance of rock in the former GDR*, pp.163-190
Ritzel, F. *Was ist au suns geworden?- Ein Häufchen Sand am Meer,* pp.293-308
Schoenbeck, M. *The new German folk-like song and its hidden political messages,* pp. 279-292

Total Immersion- Xenakis, Programme, Barbican Centre, London (March 2008)
Perpetuum Mobile Programme (2004). Berlin, Holga Wende
Attachment The, volume 6 (2006). Ebisunishi Shibuya-Ku, Tokyo.

The Wire *Adventures in Modern Music*
23 Jack's Place, London E16 NN

Volumes used range from October 1996 to November 2009. This monthly music journal has been of immense value; below are specifically cited articles listed by author:

Jacques Attali *Ether Talk* in July 2001, pp. 70-73
Lisa Banning & Derek Walmsley *On location, all tomorrow's parties,* in June 2007, p. 71
Chris Bohn(Biba Kopf), *on location* in October 1997, p. 77
epiphanies in January 1999, p.82
the primer in April 2000. pp.38 - 44
Alan Cummings *wow and flutter* in November, 2008, p. 42
once upon a time in Berlin in July 2006, pp.22-27
Drew Daniel *Aktion time vision* in January 2003, pp.20- 25
Simon Ford, *industrial revolutionaries* in October 1996, pp.35 -38
Ken Hollings, *Speaking in Tongues* in December 2003, pp.26 - 29.
David Keenan *Grunts of the Future* in March 2003, pp.39-45
Annihilating Angels in February 2004, pp. 38-45
Chris Sharp *beauty and the beholder* in October 1996, pp.19-21
Print run in February 1998
Goran Vejvoda & Rob Young *My Concrete Life* in August 2005, pp.42-49
Philip Sherburne *The Life Aquatic* in April 2008, pp. 35-39
Rob Young *Zeitkratzer* in November 2008, p.61

Uncredited photographs used from Neubauten.org photo gallery with grateful thanks.

Conferences and Talks attended:

Giving Voice - Aberystwyth University, 4-9 April 2006.
Kane in Berlin/Schaubühne perspective – Barbican Centre, London, 11 November 2006.
Being There - Queen Mary's, London, 11-12 December 2006.
Appropriating Space- Goldsmiths College, London, 22-23 February 2008.
Nick Cave Conference - Westminster University, London, 5 July 2008.
Germany's Urban Terrorism in German Cinema - a Retrospective - Manchester Cornerhouse, 16 November 2008.
Total Immersion: Xenakis, Architecture and Music, Barbican Centre, London, 7 March 2009
David Hare: Berlin/Wall, National Theatre, London, 19 March 2009.

Neubauten performances attended since 2004:

April 2004 *Perpetuum Mobile* tour*,* London

November 2004 *Grundstűck,* Supporters & Public Concerts, Palast der Republik, Berlin

April 2005 *25th Anniversary* tour*,* Amsterdam
London

August 2005 *Warten auf die Barbaren, Salzburg Festival,* Salzburg

November 2005 *Redux versus Neubauten Concert,* Berlin
November 2005 *Rede,* Helsink.

April 2006 *Rede,* Halle, Germany
October 2006 *Rede,*Preston, GB
November 2006 *Warten auf die Barbaren,* Hamburg
December 2006 ICA screening of *Grundstück*, London
April 2007 *Rede, Ether Festival*, South Bank, London
April 2007 *mini tour* – Triptych Festival, Glasgow
Koko, London
ATP, Minehead
June 2007 *Sónar Festival*, Bargeld with FM3/White, Barcelona
May 2008 *AW0* Tour – Porto,
Lisbon,
Brussels
London
November 2009 Music for 16 Futurist Noise Intoners, Town Hall, New York

Some of the research-related performances attended since 2005:

October 2005 Faust concert, near Bangor, North Wales
Christa Wolf/Cassandra, Schiffbauerdamm, Berlin
February 2006 Im Dickicht der Städte, Volksbühne, Berlin
March 2006 Hacke with Tiger Lilies, Queen Elizabeth Hall, London
June 2006 John Zorn/Mike Patton, Barbican, London
October 2006 Steve Reich, Barbican, London
November 2006 Schaubühne/Ostermeier, Blasted, Barbican, London
February 2007 Germania, Deutsches Theater, Berlin
Waiting for Godot, Schiffbauerdamm, Berlin
Meistersinger, Volksbühne, Berlin
Re-enactment of Concerto for Voice/Machinery, ICA, London
April 2007 Damo Suzuki, Tramway, Glasgow
Terry Riley, Tramway, Glasgow
May 2007 Throbbing Gristle concert, Tate Modern, London
June 2007 Throbbing Gristle rehearsal, ICA, London
June 2007 The Bays concert, Barbican, London
Diamanda Galas concert, Barbican, London
October 2007 Boredoms/Gira concert, Academy, Manchester
November 2007 Jim Thirlwell/Christian Marclay, Bush Hall, London
December 2007 Threepeny Opera, Schiffbauerdamm, Berlin
Hamletmaschine, Deutsches Theater, Berlin

January 2008 Mira Calix/Dead Wedding, Barbican, London
February 2008 La La La Human Steps, Lowry, Manchester
April 2008 Current 93 concert, Southbank, London
Goebbels/Stifters Dinge, London
June 2008 Glass/Waiting for the Barbarians, Barbican, London
July 2008 Haino/Merzbow concert, Supersonic, Birmingham
Harmonia concert, Supersonic, Birmingham
August 2008 Goebbels/I went to the house… Lyceum, Edinburgh
October 2008 Tribute to Nico- Cale, RFH, London
November 2008 Huddersfield CMF/Cage
March 2009 Xenakis Total Immersion, Barbican, London
April 2009 Chinese Underground Music, Barbican, London
Goebbels, Songs of Wars… QEH, London
July 2009 Kraftwerk concert, MIF, Manchester
Marina Abramović presents… MIF Manchester
October 2009 GAS Barbican Centre, London

Art exhibitions/specialist museums are not credited apart from the following few examples of directly relevant installation works; e.g. September 2006, Experiment and Utopia in Architecture, Barbican, London, October 2006, Walter Benjamin Archive, Akademie der Künste, Berlin, September 2007, Panic Attack- Punk years, Barbican, London, August 2009, Sound Escapes, Space, London, August 2009, Playing the Building, Roundhouse, London